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The Week

AT LAST the issue in the N.R.A. that is most important to recovery—its policy with regard to fixing of prices and restriction of output—is coming to the top. Heretofore the collective-bargaining struggle has been foremost in the news, but while this is of great moment, even the best organized workers cannot by bargaining gain more than industry produces. And the faults in the price structure, coupled with capitalist restriction of output, limit the amount of goods to be distributed. In turning over to organized industries, through the N.R.A. codes, more monopolistic powers than they already had, the administration virtually froze the depression. With General Johnson out of office, the new boards for policy and administration are reported to be leaning toward modifications of the price-fixing provisions in the direction of competition. And Federal Judge Anderson of Memphis has upset the pricing provisions of the lumber code—one of the most outrageous of all—on the ground, not that the N.I.R.A. is unconstitutional, but that it does not authorize the fixing of prices. Now the industries affected are beginning to protest against the imminent loss of their newly won powers. A thorough airing of the whole question would be wholesome. While The New Republic opposes private monopoly, it also does not believe that any N.R.A. board can enforce competition where it is most needed in the public interest. We must eventually face squarely the fact that capitalism cannot be successfully self-regulated, whether by monopoly or by competition.

WITH more members and a more aggressive spirit of the rank and file than it has had for many years, the A.F. of L. meeting in San Francisco presents, at least at the beginning, a disspiriting spectacle. The craft unions in the building trades deepen their split over jurisdictional issues, out of which neither the workers as a whole nor anyone else outside the union officials can gain the slightest advantage. This action is taken despite the earnest plea of President Green, himself friendly to the conservative group that supports craft unionism in general. It is, as we write, uncertain whether the progressive forces in the convention can succeed even in preserving the labor unity that has recently been won in the basic industries through the organization of federal unions—which the craft-union officials wish to absorb. The most the convention has offered by way of attack on the economic crisis is a plea for a thirty-hour week—which by itself can do no more than spread the limited employment that exists. When will American labor throw out its mossback leaders and resolve to take its own place in power and statesmanship, both political and industrial?

LAST Sunday's cantonal elections in France seem to have left everything where it was before—pro-

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vided, of course, that the by-elections to be held next Sunday in 101 districts do not radically change the original ratio. The bloc of Gaston Doumergue's National Union returns in its old strength. The same seems to be true of the Socialist-Communist united front with a slight shift in the Communists' favor. Herriot's Radical Socialists show a slight gain—proof that the small tradesman, the shopkeeper, the craftsman, the small business man, the farmer and petty officialdom still dominate French political life. With a certain justification Premier Doumergue claims victory for his side. He had injected a national issue into elections of a purely local and district character by calling on the electorate to cast its votes for or against his reactionary "reform" program. The character of this program, which is based on the destruction of the nation's democratic institutions, would, many believed, call forth a landslide of protest votes. Nothing of the sort happened. In France, as elsewhere in Europe, the cry of "Red Terror" has done its work. The French middle class, panic-stricken by the remote danger of a proletarian dictatorship, was not frightened enough of fascism to rebuke the conservative elements that are consciously and deliberately paving the way for it.

DOUMERGUE'S recent proposals to reform the French Constitution are labeled as the only step to save French democracy; in reality there is at present no more serious threat to French democracy than these same proposals. If enacted, they will give an unprecedented scope to the power of the parties of the right. If the rightist Premier is given full freedom to dissolve Parliament, the already slight influence of the left parties in the Cabinet will completely vanish. The curtailment of the initiative of Parliament in the matter of national expenditure means that the deputies will have no power to oppose reductions of officials' salaries decided by the Cabinet; the proposed change in the status of civil servants means the transformation of the bureaucracy into a mere tool of the conservative government. The whole tenor of the proposals is toward the *Gleichschaltung* (fascist "coördination") of France.

IT IS known beforehand that the parties of the extreme left will vote against these proposals, and naturally the conservative right will vote for them. However, they cannot pass without the support of the Radical Socialists; and the attitude of the last is at present the great unknown quantity of the French political situation. This party, numerically the strongest in France, representing the masses of small farmers, artisans and civil servants, is now undergoing the deepest crisis in its history. Before February, 1934, the Radical Socialists supported by the Socialists, governed France; after the February riots they surrendered their leading position to the conservative parties, under the threat of semi-Fascist groups against whom they were unwilling or unable to take energetic measures. From that time on, divorced from the Socialists, they consistently, though reluctantly, supported the reactionary policies of the Coalition Cabinet. To a large extent their attitude can be explained by their fear of the consequences of the Stavisky scandal wherein they were the most compromised party. The threat that further revelations of this all-involving scandal may yet be made, is a discreet form of political blackmail against the party.

ON THE occasion of the thirteenth anniversary of Il Duce's March on Rome, Mussolini, speaking in Milan in the presence of a French aviation mission, commented on the spirit of harmony and friendship between Italy and her French neighbor. Without apparent reason—correspondents say they noticed a sly twinkle in the dictator's eye—his audience of several hundred thousand broke into uproarious laughter. Mussolini's reply was typical. With a wide grin he waited until the merriment had subsided, then called to the gathering: "Your attitude indicates that you are a very intelligent people." What, we wonder, did he mean by that? Was it that his protestations of friendship for his opponent of yesterday are a sham? Does Italy know its Duce too well from past and present performances to be duped by fine words? In his relations with Nazi Germany the Italian Prime Minister is playing the same double game. While his newspapers continue to pour vials of righteous wrath over Germany's statesmen, Mussolini is entertaining a German mission in Rome, nourishing persistent rumors of an impending Austro-German understanding. He flaunts his daggers in the face of Jugoslavia, keeping alive the threat of an imminent war to force the Italian nation into more pliant acceptance of his bankrupting armament program. Italy laughs—and laughter makes for health, even, let us hope, in a fascist state.

IT MIGHT have been supposed that the Scottsboro case was confused and tragic enough, but last week there occurred in it a new and startling development on which the facts are by no means clear. The official version of the state of Alabama, according to the newspapers, is: that there was an attempt to bribe Victoria Price, the chief complainant in the case, to change her testimony; that the attorneys accused of the bribery, Daniel Swift and Sol Kone, were extradited from Nashville, Tennessee. A contrary version amends the story in all the vital particulars: that there was no attempt at bribery; that when Swift and Kone, who had gone to Nashville to get Victoria Price's recantation, were arrested, a writ of habeas corpus for them was obtained; that when the writ was served on the Alabama deputy sheriff waiting to receive Swift and Kone and take them to Alabama, the deputy merely tossed it on the sidewalk, put his prisoners into his car and drove off with them. The only thing that is not in doubt at the moment is that Swift and Kone

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are in jail in Huntsville, Alabama. Thanks to a telegram from Governor Lehman to Governor Miller of Alabama asking protection for the two men, they are probably safe from personal injury at the moment. How safe they are to be from the legal machinery of Alabama we can tell better when there is more information about Victoria Price's recantation and the writ of habeas corpus tossed on the Nashville sidewalk.

THE strike of 25,000 banana workers in Costa Rica, which began early last August, has developed into the greatest labor struggle in that country's history. Led by the Atlantic Syndicate of Workers, a revolutionary union, and supported by a sympathy strike on the railroads and docks, the workers have demonstrated an extraordinary solidarity. This is revealed, in part, by the fact that for the first time in the history of the United Fruit Company one of its ships recently docked in New York without a banana in her hold. At present, however, the strike has reached a critical stage. The Costa Rican government has apparently joined hands with the United Fruit Company to crush the strike—on the basis that it is an insurrection. Hundreds of "agitators" have been arrested and deported, and two weeks ago, Jaime Cervas, one of the strike leaders, was severely wounded when the National Police (who served as the Costa Rican army) attacked strike headquarters. Two other strike leaders, both of them Communist deputies in the Costa Rican Congress, have been arrested and charged with sedition. Meanwhile, President Jimenez has called a special session of Congress for the purpose of outlawing the Communist Party.

YET despite these terroristic tactics of the Costa Rican government, the banana strike was virtually won late last August when the government itself negotiated and signed a settlement between the strikers and the independent planters. But this agreement—representing distinct gains for the workers in hours and wages and providing for recognition of the union—was flatly rejected by the United Fruit Company, dominating factor in the banana fields. That the government should thereupon have discovered the union to be insurrectionary is not surprising. Such incidents are all too familiar in the course of American imperialism in the Caribbean. Doubtless the United Fruit Company looks upon the strike as an insurrection and doubtless it believes that the amazing popularity of the Communist Party should be promptly suppressed at all costs. We say that these are the probable reasons for the company's determined assault upon the workers because the other reason, frequently given in such circumstances—that the company cannot afford to raise wages—does not apply in the case. For the United Fruit Company has just reported a net profit of more than $10,000,000 during the first nine months of the year.

AN UGLY aftermath of the Pacific Coast longshoremen's strike is a murder case now going on in Portland, Oregon. Despite the agreement made in terminating the strike that there would be no discrimination against the strikers, the Luckenbach lines organized a company union, The Columbia River Association, and on August 20 announced they would hire only Association members. Members of the International Longshoremen's Union went to picket the Luckenbach piers in Portland, but finding no stevedores yet on the job, moved in a body to the hiring hall of the Columbia River Association. After they had stood about a while apparently doing nothing, a shot was fired, from where is not known, and James Conner, an Association man, fell dead inside the hall. Charges of murder were later brought against twenty-eight I.L.A. men. A private law firm, Collier and Bernard, came forward to aid the district attorney in the prosecution. They refused to say who was paying their fee. At this point it was learned that no firearms of any sort had been found on any I.L.A. men outside the hall, but that five Association men inside the hall had revolvers and that at least two had fired theirs. Since neither Association man who admitted firing had a permit, the public scandal finally forced the district attorney to arrest one of them, Karl Grammar, on a charge of murder. Then a strange thing happened. The eminent private firm of Collier and Bernard at once retired from the prosecution and reëntered the case as defense counsel for Grammar. The bones of a frame-up rarely show so plainly on the surface.

JUDGE Walter P. Stacy, Admiral Henry A. Wiley and Dr. James Mullenbach, who comprise the Steel and Textile Labor Relations Boards, are very busy these days in their efforts to mediate labor grievances in the two industries that employ close to 1,500,000 workers. Apparently, however, they are not quite so busy as Earl F. Reed, the Steel Corporation's lawyer. Mr. Reed was arguing the Weirton Steel case in Wilmington, Delaware, at the time that the Steel Labor Relations Board met in Pittsburgh to hear, among others, complaints filed by workers from the Jones and Laughlin steel plant in Aliquippa, Pennsylvania. When the Board was ready to hear these complaints, an attorney appeared to plead that only Mr. Reed knew and was able to handle the case, and since he was at the time tied up in Wilmington, it would be necessary to postpone the hearing. The Board hesitated. There was a great deal of demand upon its time. But the lawyer persisted and the Board agreed to come back to Pittsburgh October 15, to suit Mr. Reed's convenience. What appeared to be the most justifiable objection came from the workers. They argued that the postponement meant to them more than a delay in adjusting the usual sort of complaints. To them it meant that they were not safe to go home. Aliquippa is a company town, ruled

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by company guards. These guards have been very busy since the Jones and Laughlin workers began to join the Amalgamated Association last August. Scores of workers have been beaten up. "Were you beaten up?" the union's local president was asked. "I? Not so bad," was his reply. "I only needed a couple of stitches on my head and had my shoulder wrenched a bit. Some of the other fellows really got it good and proper."

The Last Stand of Spanish Democracy

THE Spanish revolutionists, after their initial mistakes, learned from the experience of the German labor movement. They refused to submit without a struggle to the drift into fascism, and did not rely merely on a hope of throwing out a dictator after reaction had destroyed the democratic republic. They composed their differences in a united front. The powerful Socialists and Syndicalists united with the less powerful but growing Communist Party on their left, and with the liberal Republicans and Catalan Separatists on their right. They resolved not to depend solely on elections, but to strike promptly when the crisis came. They had a plan of action—not, in view of subsequent events, a good enough plan, but at least a plan. Two misfortunes seem to have prevented their success: defection of the Anarchists, and the failure of the rank and file of the regular army to come over to the people. The Spanish labor movement is not yet strong enough to dominate, and any popular revolt without military forces and equipment of its own is at a grave disadvantage if it is opposed by a well equipped modern army. Before these lines reach the eyes of our readers, it is likely that the left coalition to preserve and make effective Spanish democracy will have been defeated by the semi-fascist Lerroux and by Gil Robles and his military dictatorship.

The Spanish revolution put an end to the feudal state. In an astonishingly brief space of time, with less bloodshed than any revolution in Europe had ever known, the Republic was established. On the basis of a draft prepared by the Socialist jurist Jimenez Asua, the fundamental principles of the democratic-republican Constitution were laid down. Unfortunately, what the Socialist Labor Minister Largo Caballero said of Spain's labor law—that it was the work of a Socialist but not socialistic—applied with equal truth to the entire legal structure of the Republic. Although the new Constitution did away with all privileges of birth and religion, and altered the political structure of the nation, it left the deeper economic foundations absolutely untouched.

The Spanish Republic, says the preamble of the 1931 Constitution, is a "democratic republic of workers." "But," explains its interpreter, Deputy Luis Araquistain, "not in the sense of Soviet Russia nor in the fascist conception of that phrase. We see in Spain a republic based on the rights of workers of all classes which respects and honors labor but accords it no special privilege." The democratic revolution of April and May, 1931, like the Russian Revolution of February, 1917, might have developed into a social revolution had Spain had a strongly united labor movement. The economic self-sufficiency of the country, its political isolation and its primitive stage of industrial development—the fact, in short, that labor would have faced no highly integrated capitalist class, were factors favorable to the creation and maintenance of a socialist state. But the labor movement was divided into two groups of approximately equal strength. The Socialists sent three Ministers into the Cabinet and became the protectors and defenders of the existing regime. The Anarcho-Syndicalists exhausted the energy of their followers in terroristic acts. The Communist Party, the third of the labor parties, was still in its beginnings, hampered in its growth by the social structure of the country.

In the first stage of a revolution the ruling classes are always ready voluntarily to sacrifice part of their wealth, if by so doing they can secure their possession of the other half. In Germany, too, the industrial barons offered a portion of their wealth to the state, when the Republic proclaimed the socialization of property. Later, when the storm of revolt had passed and the revolutionary elements had been annihilated, these offers were withdrawn and today they are forgotten. A revolution cannot later achieve what it neglects in those burning days. Terror-stricken property regains its confidence and finds new methods, new weapons.

The young Republic could point to achievements in law, which remained largely inoperative. Social legislation was passed, an entire system of land laws was adopted, the separation of Church and State decreed. But the wide gap between legal commitments and actuality became too striking to be ignored. The promised division of the feudal estates was never realized. The Church and the wealthy agrarians joined hands for a powerful offensive. The industrialists, resentful of irksome legal restrictions upon their traditional right to exploit the industrial proletariat, were fertile soil for fascist teachings. With the help of the Church, these elements were able to win a foothold among the small dissatisfied peasants and the numerous middle class. The Social Democracy was made the scapegoat for the Republic's inadequacies. In the election of November 13, 1933, it lost votes, while the Communist Party increased its vote from 60,000 to almost 400,000.

Even at its inception, the republic bore the seeds its own speedy disintegration. In the revolutionary committee were men like the conservative Miguel Maura, who played a political role in the Primo de Rivera dictatorship. The first President, Niceto Alcala Zamora, had been a Cabinet member under

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the monarchy and withdrew from the revolutionary government four months after its inception in protest against the anticlerical paragraph in the Constitution. In December of the same year he was elected President and has held that office ever since. When Premier Lerroux, so reports the Associated Press, asked the President for instructions at the calling of the general strike last week, Zamora answered: "Do your full duty," and the die was cast.

Just as von Hindenburg betrayed the liberals who elected him by making Hitler Chancellor of the Reich, so Zamora undermined the power of the liberal Manuel Azana and, about a year ago, lifted the conservative Lerroux and with him the Catholic Church into the saddle. During Lerroux's two brief terms in office—this is his third term as Premier of Spain—he organized the forces of reaction and laid the cornerstone for the return of the clerics, landowners and fascists to power.

It is probable that the present showdown would have come sooner, perhaps immediately after the November elections, had Madrid been less afraid of the Catalans, who confronted its fascist aspirations with a barrier of great strength. The autonomist movement of Catalonia is irrevocably antifascist. Even the Union Socialista de Cataluna is autonomistic and its relations with the Socialist Party of Spain have been somewhat strained in consequence. The workers of Catalonia, in so far as they are followers of the highly developed anarchist movement, are organized in the left-liberal, small-peasant "Esquerra," which controls the Luis Companys government.

The arrest of Catalonia's anarchist leaders last May by Companys prevented the achievement of a proletarian united front. Companys' surrender to Madrid last Sunday was the signal for an appeal to the Anarchists by their leaders to coöperate with the Socialists and Communists in the general strike. In consequence the smoldering fight in Barcelona broke out anew and Madrid's fascists, for the first time, have been facing a united labor front in the Catalan situation. If Lerroux is successful in his attempt to break the Catalan rebellion, the strongest bulwark against fascism in Spain will have been vanquished.

Labor probably will lose this heroic fight. But it had no choice. Lerroux, backed by Gil Robles and the Catholic "Popular Acción," was taking control of one position of power after another in preparation for the final conflict. Gil Robles, too shrewd to take his place in this stop-gap Cabinet, placed his henchmen in the most important posts. Through them he now controls the Ministry of Justice, which regulates juridical, legal and financial relations of the State to the Church and the schools, the Ministry of Agriculture, which can and will overrule the law that provides for the division and leasing of the large estates to the working farmer, and the Ministry of Labor which, under the Republic, made an honest but weak effort to reduce hours, increase wages and enforce better working conditions. Thus fortified he can leave the work of cleaning up to the reactionary Lerroux.

It is not in the nature of the Spaniard to submit, as did his German brother, without a last desperate protest against this destruction of his great revolutionary gesture. Liberals, Socialists, Communists, Syndicalists, Autonomists—they pooled their forces for battle without counting the cost, preferring death to fascist slavery.

A Sample of Depression

IN THEIR efforts to paint a brighter side to the depression, conservatives have frequently resorted to a familiar argument. The depression, they have repeatedly declared, was not a real hardship for those workers who managed to keep their jobs. That is, while wages were being drastically cut, the cost of living was declining with almost equal severity. Thus, according to the silver-lining-seekers, the weekly pay envelope, though smaller than in 1929, was able to command almost the same standard of living throughout the depression. To those concerned with bolstering up faith in a faltering economic order this line of reasoning was rather reassuring. For even though it ignored the desperate plight of the unemployed, it did seem to prove that for the majority of the population still having incomes things were not much worse in 1932 than in 1929.

It must be admitted that this argument had a certain plausibility so long as there was no first-hand information to show otherwise. However, the Department of Labor has now made public a study, "Effect of the Industrial Depression on the Families of Railway Employees," that seriously damages this comforting hypothesis. For here we have an account of what actually happened to living standards, not in terms of index numbers or statistical averages but in the case histories of 1,000 individual families employed by railroads. It is a study, in the words of the author Professor Carter Goodrich of Columbia University, that "records a slow retreat from relative security toward destitution and despair." The individual histories present an appalling picture "of educational opportunities abandoned and health needs neglected, and of lives stripped bare of even the most inexpensive forms of recreation and social life."

To realize the full significance of the data, it is important to note how the survey was made. Professor Goodrich himself admits that the basis on which families were selected for study gives the data an inherent bias—in the direction of minimizing the actual poverty of railway workers as a whole. The families were carefully selected, to be sure, to afford a representative view of all classes of workers—but there was one important qualification. The breadwinners had to have been employed in April, 1933. Obviously, as the report makes clear, "any body of

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workers who still held their jobs in the worst months of 1933 was necessarily a picked group, and on the railroads the practice of seniority made it certain that these men would be relatively old in years and in service." Actually, 64 percent of the men interviewed were at least forty years of age. And their records of continuous service were as follows: three-fourths had worked ten years, one-half had worked fifteen years and one-fourth had worked twenty years.

Yet to these veteran railway men the depression brought a much greater reduction in income than is generally realized. It is commonly assumed that railway pay was cut only 10 percent. Other factors, however, played a far more important part than this pay cut in reducing incomes. The men, though employed, were almost universally forced to work part time, and a large number—more than a third—suffered demotions through the elimination of many of the better paid positions. It is not possible to give many details here, but one example will be illustrative. Mr. W——, a stationary fireman, was earning 63 cents an hour in 1929 and working seven days a week. In 1930, when stationary engineers were ordered to do their own firing, for economy purposes, and the firemen were transferred to other duties, he was demoted to a round-house laborer, a position paying 36 cents an hour. In 1932 his pay was cut still further by the general 10-percent wage reduction and by a shortening of his working week to five days. Thus, in April, 1933, he was earning only $65 a month as compared with $130 in 1929.

As a result of these practices, it is found that between July, 1929, and April, 1933, two-thirds of the men had suffered reductions of at least 20 percent and nearly half had suffered reductions of 30 percent. And as a result of various decreases, actual incomes in 1932 were startlingly low: two-thirds received less than $1,500; three-eighths received less than $1,000; one-tenth received less than $500.

It is hardly necessary to point out here that these incomes do not come even within striking distance of the amount required for a decent standard of living—and this in a most favored group of workers in a well organized industry. And when it is realized that many of these railroad families, despite their sharply cut incomes, were forced to support friends and relatives, it is not difficult to imagine the tragic results in terms of family well-being.

We can do no better than to quote the bare summary of the thousand case histories:

> Frequently they describe the crowding of families into inferior accommodations, and few fail to record the use of shabby clothing or to note the items of a rough and meager diet. Even these economies, moreover, were not enough to maintain the solvency of this unusually stable group of workmen. Frequently they had entered the depression with substantial savings, and more than half owned or were buying their homes. By the time they were visited, however, forty-three of these owners had lost their homes, two-fifths of these owners were in arrears in payment. Cash savings were virtually exhausted, and no less than half of the histories reported the sacrifice of insurance policies. Yet despite all these efforts, 70 percent of the families had gone seriously into debt.

The economies that these families were forced to practise give some hint of their desperate poverty. In nearly one-third of the families visited one or more members needed medical attention but could not afford it. More than half the families with children had been forced to reduce their milk supply from 50 to 75 percent. One family with six children had had no fresh milk for four years. Butter, meat, fresh fruit and vegetables were drastically cut and sometimes eliminated altogether. Nearly 40 percent of the families reported that they could afford no recreation at all and for most families it had become an "extravagance." Many reported that they had not seen a moving picture in two, three or even four years. A 10-cent movie once a month for the children was the only recreation in other families. And although passes for the railroad were still available, they were not being used because "a trip takes clothes and money." Most extraordinary is the revelation that even such simple activities as the interchange of visits among friends was often out of the question. "If you can't offer your neighbor a bit of refreshment, you don't like to ask him in."

"It was not because these people did not realize the need for amusement that they gave it up," says the report. "Nor was it because they underestimated the importance of education that the young people left school." Yet 157 boys and girls were forced to defer their education until the family could afford it. "When one considers how small a sum is needed to attend the public schools—enough for carfare, books, clothing—one can realize the poverty of these children."

And when one finds this utter destitution among the families of senior railway workers—men who have always been considered to be in the aristocracy of labor—one wonders what happened in the families of those breadwinners who were presumably less fortunately employed.

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Writers in the Jungle

Robert Herrick Judges Some Proletarian Novels

THE "SOCIAL QUESTION," as it used to be called politely, the struggle between capital and labor over the fruits of industry, has been a recurring theme in English literature since the middle of the last century, at least. It is inescapable in a civilization such as ours. With the breakdown of machine economy now in accelerating process, the interest of novelists in the miseries, stresses and ironies of the victims of that machine economy is not surprising. An old wine, but the bottles are new and of an amazing variety. To one who remembers the publication of Norris's "The Octopus," of Sinclair's "The Jungle"—much the best of the so-called "muckraking school"—of Phillips' "The Plum Tree," and of many another effort to depict the clashes of a disordered society, there is nothing new in the general theme, but much that is arresting in the variety, the detailed exactitude and the angle of vision with which old situations are handled by the newcomers to the field.

The older labor-problem novels were written by outsiders, at the best sympathetic and intelligent, but without personal experience. Their material, even in the case of Sinclair's "Jungle" and "Oil," was gotten up after a few weeks of observation on the scene of battle, more or less reading, interviewing of social workers, etc. The new proletarian novels are not merely clever reporting: they have been lived first by their creators in the original terms of labor. Jack Conroy's "The Disinherited" is obviously almost pure biography—scenes from the life of a casual laborer in mine, factory, road and bridge building. "The Land of Plenty" covers intensively a Pacific Coast lumber mill; "The Shadow Before" is based on the New Bedford textile strike (with traces of Gastonia); while two other labor novels, "To Make My Bread" and "Call Home the Heart," present the case of the mountain whites of the South pressed into the industrial hopper of a textile mill. Halper's "The Foundry," which is likely to be more widely read than any of them, could not have been written without a thorough acquaintance with the machines, the workers, the processes of electrotyping, to be gained only by having been part of such an organization. All these writers are young; they write of what they have known intimately, painfully. Quite possibly their effective work will be confined to one (or a very few) books based on what they have lived, not as observers but as workers in the machine. The vast field of American industrialism may thus be covered minutely by an ever growing army of experts, each a master of his subject in a sense that no writer of an earlier generation ever was, not even the prolific Mr. Sinclair. There results an intimate reality to these newer pictures of labor conditions that is convincing, impressive. If one cares to realize what our economic jungle is like to those caught in its depths, just how it feels to be jobless or living in terror of losing one's job, how our bridges and roads are built, our automobiles and radios are turned out by the hundreds of thousands, what the complex of modern machine production means, not in statistics but in human terms of the flesh and blood that pays for it, it is better to read these "proletarian" novels rather than books by economists and social theorists, who are so volubly trying to explain why it is all so.

Another advantage that the newer labor novels have over the older and more conventional types is that they do not proffer solutions, even of the gently socialistic variety suggested by Sinclair. There is no bright panacea in them for the present turmoil. Propaganda of the legitimate sort there may be in plenty, the propaganda of situations presented grimly, occasionally (not often) a more direct propaganda through the words of key characters who are more aware than their fellows of the issues. But there is a refreshing absence of that rhetorical vehemence with which less capable novelists attempt to drive home their theses. These younger writers out of the ranks of labor seem to have mastered the first lesson of their art, that the function of the novel is to portray, not to argue. Doubtless all of them are radicals (perhaps in the cant of the day "communists")—how could they be less? But with canny self-discipline they stick for the most part to their last, which is to relate what they know convincingly, not to make a blueprint for a new society. . . .

The sudden emergence of this new labor literature on the heels of the neurasthenic school of postwar decadents concerned mainly with gin, sex and Freud, is significant, prophetic. One of the authentic symptoms of a revolutionary period, as Mr. George Soule has recently pointed out, is the appearance of a literature of revolt, which by spreading conditions and ideas in popular form becomes an active reagent in the change of bourgeois-conditioned minds, that must first take place. Until the middle as well as the working-class mind is awakened, convinced, until society becomes alive with socially minded individuals, there is no hope for any New Deal in a real sense. Such novels as these are therefore educational; their writers know our world as it is. They know the horror, the squalor, the physical and spiritual degradations of the mass who are the helpless, and often sordid, victims of an incoherently motivated society.

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Not the least of their functions, although probably one not contemplated by them beforehand, is to reveal the vulgar heaven of the employing class as glimpsed by the mass—of the men in the front office at the push buttons of the industrial system, their lieutenants—and their awful women—of the Thayers ("The Shadow Before") the Carls, MacMahons, Digbys ("The Land of Plenty"). These portraits of topdogs may not be fair to the class as a whole—there will always be a difference of opinion as to that—but they reflect accurately enough the impression the boss type makes upon the underdog. Of further interest is the final collapse in the eyes of clear-sighted youth of two venerable American superstitions—that of the vaunted superiority of "the American standard of living" to any other ever known, which for the vast majority is meaningless, and the other delusion which is that under the guarantees of a perfect Constitution the individual worker may by the exercise of the proper virtues climb the golden ladder of success and enter the ranks of the elect in the inner office. (He may, indeed, if sufficiently sly and subservient, become a petty Thayer or a blustering Carl—but what of it?) That sacred "Americanism" so devoutly invoked by the beneficiaries of the industrial system (Mr. Hoover confuses it with "liberty") covers an aridity and banality of life, top and bottom, expressing itself in promiscuous fornications, alcoholism, vapid sports. The successful worker on emerging from the dinner-pail ranks is only too well conditioned to a forlorn repetition of the master-class habit of life.

Another, to me of special significance this, axiom of American society is recognized by these ruthless young writers to be fallacious—bunk—and that is the *via sacra* of Education, common school, high school and college. Some of their characters, especially the mountain women of the South, are still pathetically under the delusion of the educational escape for their young. They sacrifice themselves to the all devouring machines in the mill towns in order to give their children advantages they believe will free them from their own terrible bondage, only to see the machines reach out for the young at the earliest legal age. Cantwell's Charlie, whose father with two daughters married to men out of work has been obliged to see his son leave school for the mill, envies his mate Walt because the latter has been to college for a few terms. Both speak the same illiterate slovenly jargon that passes for English among the workers (and bosses also). Sinclair Lewis wrote the American vernacular better than anybody to the date of "Main Street" and "Babbitt," but Rollins and Conroy and Halper reveal him to be far out of date. As for other cultural evidences of an intellectual training, they are nil, from the homes of the "executives," with their vulgar sex-obsessed women, to the flop houses where the casual laborers seek shelter. It is another and extraneous question why this should be so, why all our vast effort to educate has accomplished so little, not even taught the rudiments of the common language, and done nothing discernible to heighten the spiritual tempo of our society. It may be because in the United States education has become increasingly involved in the success obsession, regarded as a useful step in the ladder of economic self-interest, rather than a method of understanding, an end in itself. . . .

So the most compelling argument for a revolutionary change in society, to me at least, presented in this proletarian literature is one that its authors may never have intended to make, and that is simply the worthlessness of the social ideals of the successful, of those who by accident or cunning or adaptability to their environment have triumphed in the jungle. Their secure haven is not worth the blood and tears it has cost.

So much for the *What* and the *Why* of this new proletarian literature. As for the *How* one may have reservations. There is a stimulating variety of pattern, from the artless "The Disinherited" to the sophisticated—and pretentious—"The Shadow Before," with examples of the intermediate sound tradition as "To Make My Bread." Some of the subtleties of James and Proust are applied with startling effect in Cantwell's "Land of Plenty." Of promising experimentation in technique there is no lack.

Literature, however, must be conceived in personal terms, not in abstractions, not in types and masses. While there is a healthy avoidance of the abstract in these novels, such as my generation indulged in too freely, there is also a failure in impersonation. Many of the characters are interchangeable, literary robots taken from the writer's box of tricks and pulled about like marionettes on wires. Under the welter of names it is difficult to recall individualities; not infrequently the characters swap roles, as Walt and Charlie. No doubt a mechanized and regimented society such as ours erases the individual, substitutes masses and classes for the person—that is one of its crueler aspects. But the business of the novelist is to discover the individual lost in the mass and restore his almost obliterated personality. The only one of these younger novelists who seems to me to have an innate sense of character and to employ it consistently if crudely is Halper. Whatever defects his entertaining "Foundry" may have, no one will confuse his characters. The popularity of his two books is due more to this fact than to their profundity or passion. To a less degree this gift of creating character in the round is shown by Grace Lumpkin, especially in her women, least of all by Rollins in "The Shadow Before," although he more than any other I know has given form to the impersonal machine force of the mill.

There may well evolve a mass art as a mass civilization, where the individual counts for little except as an interchangeable factor in the whole, but our society has not yet reached that point. We are still conditioned, to use the popular term, by a long individualistic tradition. Our contemporary novelists

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may be much cleverer than their predecessors in discovering psychological inconsistencies, in manipulating behavioristic attitudes, but their results must be more than a collection of names and traits and reactions. The rhythmic representation of the pound and the thrust of the machine, the reverberation of the great mill, may be magnificent and moving, elemental as the sea itself, yet the mill hands, the organizers, the bosses, foremen, what not, must be something more than gesticulating bodies whirled about by the roaring surge of industry. So far as I can see, enduring literature will be created in purely human terms, not in rhythms and ideas.

Another deeper limitation I find in these vivid pictures of our new world, and that is their failure in the ultimate objectivity of the great artist. Although, as I have implied, there is little crude propaganda, little rhetorical shrillness over wrongs and injustices, there is no perception of the truth that in the class struggle both sides—all sides—are equally "conditioned," to repeat the favorite term—the employer and his satellites as fully as the ill paid workers. I cannot recollect a single instance where this elementary truth is recognized, where the top-dog is presented not with sympathy but with a definite awareness that he too is moved by a terrifying necessity along predetermined lines of least resistance—the bosses, the executives, the impersonal boards of directors, all without exception bound to the same coil of necessity through fear, shame, desire, habit. Alone the skilled technicians perhaps escape the bondage of the industrial system which they have so largely created, and their ultimate role is yet to be determined. When the realization of such a universal determinism comes to the novelist, his attitude toward his material must be profoundly affected, not with a sentimental sympathy or a silly "service" ballyhoo but by a tragic conviction that the social system is writing its own doom, and his part is merely to record the steps. Just because nobody is really guilty, individually, because all the human factors are equally bound in a vicious circle of cause and effect, the complete collapse of the system is predictable. If, as well meaning "liberals" seem to believe, it were all a simple problem of a fairer division of the good things of the world; if all that was wrong were an injustice here and there perpetrated by a few individuals in positions of advantage and power, the rectification of these defects in our economy would be a comparatively easy matter. It is just this failure by well intentioned New Dealers to realize that a redistribution of profits and incomes will not solve the problem that makes the whole Roosevelt effort appear so silly and ineffectual. . . .

The creative writer at least is not under the compulsion of political exigencies, of expediency or partisanship. He is free—it is his supreme function to exercise such freedom—to rise beyond the turmoil and the strife, to see *all* the human elements in the social complex compelled to follow the vicious round of the circle. Until our vigorous young novelists, so well equipped as they are, can surmount the barricades of their own prejudices and see the automata on the other side with less jaundiced eyes, they will not come into the fulness of the abounding harvest awaiting them. It takes imagination as well as understanding to get the Thayers and MacMahons and Carls *et al.* right, not merely as grotesques of greedy human impulses. Bitter mockery, contempt are not enough.

ROBERT HERRICK.

Farley's We-Boys

INCREASINGLY you hear it said that the Roosevelt administration is the most politician-ridden of any in recent years. It is charged that Jim Farley's arm reaches everywhere, and that all departments of the New Deal are being forced to serve strictly partisan ends.

Speaking scientifically, there is no ready way to prove or disprove these accusations. The question: "Is the Roosevelt regime more cursed with venal politics than its predecessors?" is like the question: "Is there more drinking since the end of prohibition?" Neither political jobbery nor bootlegging lends itself to quantitative measurement.

However, two things obviously account for much of the current gossip. The first is that the number of federal jobs increased between March, 1933, and July 31, 1934 (the latest date for which figures are available), by 99,626, and very few of these jobs are protected by civil service. No such shining opportunity for party spoilsmen has existed for many years, certainly not since the World War. Second, Mr. Farley and his assistant, Emil Hurja, have been extremely brazen; the astonishing excuse is offered that this brazenness represents the "realism" of the New Deal. Nothing quite like Mr. Hurja's brisk business methods, his card catalogue and maps, was ever known in Washington.

During its first six months of life, the Roosevelt administration probably established a record in cleanliness. Apparently at first Mr. Farley didn't altogether comprehend what was going on, couldn't keep track of the New Deal agencies being created overnight. His first move was unhappy. He sent Mr. Hurja to the P.W.A. to spy out the land, and Secretary Ickes kicked Hurja out of his office. Secretaries Ickes, Wallace and Perkins constituted a League Against Farley, and successfully fought him off for many weeks.

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A change seems to have come about sometime between September, 1933, and the beginning of 1934. By that time, the crucial posts in the New Deal agencies had been filled by as brilliant a group of non-partisan experts as were ever gathered together. Apparently a sort of tacit arrangement was arrived at by which these experts were to be left unmolested, and in return Mr. Farley was to be consulted on subsequent vacancies.

At present, for example, in the A.A.A. you find a Farley deputy and a representative of Mr. Wallace in daily conference. All applicants for jobs are supposed to appear before them. The Farley deputy examines the candidate's endorsements from his or her local Democratic boss; the Wallace representative considers his or her technical fitness. Apparently disagreements are resolved by a kind of horse-trading: the appointment of an expert with scant political backing is exchanged for the appointment of, let us say, the nitwit relative of a United States Senator.

The surrender of N.R.A. occurred when, last winter, it was reported that N.R.A. would be transformed from an emergency to a permanent organization—which meant that all N.R.A. employees would need to be reappointed. About the same time, General Johnson issued a statement boasting that he, his father and his grandfather had all voted the Democratic ticket. Rightly or wrongly, the General's statement was interpreted as notice that good party men would get the jobs. For days afterwards, the N.R.A. staff interviewed Senators and Representatives, and wrote and telegraphed to its home-state and county committeemen. At present, with few exceptions, N.R.A. jobs have to "clear" through Mr. Farley's deputies.

Mr. Farley has had greater trouble in getting his claws on P.W.A. appointments, but on the whole the P.W.A. has turned out to be his best instrument in welding a national Democratic machine. By the nature of our economic system, no P.W.A. allotment is ever made without benefiting real-estate owners and contractors, nor without creating construction jobs for which local Democratic leaders can claim credit. On the other hand, it should be said that in his Bureau of Investigations, Mr. Ickes has created a graft-detecting organization without parallel in our history.

Mr. Farley's particular job among New Deal agencies has been the H.O.L.C., which he has dominated from its inception. For many months, the California Democratic state committee and the California H.O.L.C. branch were indistinguishable. In New York, one of Mr. Farley's chief lieutenants is state H.O.L.C. manager, and the H.O.L.C.'s secretary, Daniel H. Skilling, has just become secretary of the New York Democratic state committee. Mr. Farley has puffed up the national H.O.L.C. payroll until it now comprises 19,341 names, or almost one-fifth of all additional employees appointed since Mr. Roosevelt took office. In contrast, the A.A.A. has 5,771 employees; the P.W.A. 4,253; N.R.A. only 3,728. The F.E.R.A., now perhaps the most important unit of the New Deal, manages with a staff of 262.

Among the traditional governmental departments, you find much the same spoils system that has always existed, apparently neither better nor worse. Recently there have been complaints that Farley is trying to extend his jurisdiction to the career personnel of the State Department, and demanding political endorsements before appointments as counsellor or secretary of embassy are made. Against this, should be set the fact that, instead of using all the major ambassadorships to repay his campaign debts, Mr. Roosevelt has made at least two appointments—Mr. Dodd to Berlin and Mr. Bullitt to Moscow—on the grounds of technical competence.

Mr. Roosevelt's complaisance towards appointments to the federal judiciary is perhaps hardest to excuse. Last year a federal judge was appointed in New York City apparently solely to aid Mr. Farley in the New York mayoralty election. Mr. Roosevelt's appointment of Mr. Harland W. Rippy in up-state New York brought protests even from his warm supporters. A judge in one of the Rocky Mountain States seems to have been designated because of his popularity among fraternal bodies. Equally inexcusable is the fact that political considerations have been permitted to enter into the appointment of Labor Department mediators.

A few days ago there came to light a circular letter addressed to all federal employees. It is credited to the Florida Democratic organization. Dated September 17 and signed by George B. Hills, director of finance for Florida of the Democratic National Committee, the letter recites the need of paying off the party's 1932 campaign debt, and continues:

> It appears that sufficient funds will be secured to meet Florida's quota if each citizen of this state now employed by the federal government will promptly contribute not less than $10 per thousand dollars of annual salary he or she receives. . . .
>
> I trust you will see fit to coöperate in this matter. Please make your check or remittance payable to Treasurer, Democratic National Committee, or to George B. Hills, director of finance, and mail same to me at Post Office Box 4817, Jacksonville, Florida. Receipt will come to you direct from the treasurer of the Democratic National Committee.

In this letter Mr. Farley's committee just skips around the laws forbidding the sale of federal offices. When a copy of the letter fell into Secretary Wallace's hands, he issued a memorandum guardedly expressing his disapproval. It is a pity Mr. Roosevelt did not decide to back up Mr. Wallace by making a public statement of his own. No President who ignores a letter of this kind can claim much moral superiority to the Crokers, Murphys, and Currys of Tammany Hall.

Mr. Roosevelt deserves great praise for the

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many non-partisan appointments made at the beginning of his term. He deserves credit for his insistence that Democratic national committeemen either resign their party posts or cease acting as Washington lobbyists, although the practical result of this gesture has not been great. At any rate, an ex-national committeeman who, last spring, had a large share in killing the Copeland Pure Food and Drug Bill and in choking to death Senator Black's air-mail investigation, is still in business in Washington, and still seems to do well.

Probably Mr. Roosevelt also should have praise for the not very stout attempt of Secretary Morgenthau to clean up the Treasury. Recently after stumbling on apparent instances of Treasury officials' acting as collectors for the Democratic Party, Mr. Morgenthau issued a departmental order forbidding all political activity of whatever kind. Whether because Mr. Roosevelt then withdrew his support or for some other reason, Mr. Morgenthau soon afterwards was compelled to issue an "interpretation" of his first order, denying he had meant to prohibit a Treasury employee from making speeches or attending political conventions, "provided offensive partisanship is not displayed in said speeches," and provided he does not "use the power of his public office to control or manipulate the proceedings or display such obtrusive partisanship as to cause public scandal." This seeming capitulation by Mr. Morgenthau aroused derisive laughter in Washington, but even to forbid "obtrusive partisanship" is more than any previous Secretary of the Treasury has done.

One of the elementary needs of this country is a disinterested, permanent civil service, similar in character to those of England and Germany. As the functions of the federal government increase, this need will grow steadily greater. Whether or not the Roosevelt administration is more venal than its predecessors, it is certainly true that it has not made much of beginning towards the establishment of such a civil service. Nor so long as Mr. Roosevelt keeps a machine boss in the office of Postmaster General, where he has the oldest and largest group of federal employees directly under his power, is it reasonable to assume that Mr. Roosevelt has any intention of undertaking this task.

JONATHAN MITCHELL.

The Congress on War and Fascism

WHEN THE second Congress of the American League Against War and Fascism met in Chicago on September 28, it confronted a far gloomier countrywide situation than on its first assembly a year ago. It is difficult to compute from statistics the sum of lawless violence directed against those who would rectify the distribution of goods under the present social order, or change it altogether, but beyond doubt the increase during the past year has been appalling. The delegates had in their hands the reports of the International Labor Defense for the months from January to September, showing fifty-four killed in the economic struggle, including six in the West Coast marine workers' strike and twelve in the futile textile strike. They also recorded 104 cases of alleged criminal syndicalism, sedition and insurrection which are now in the courts.

To this congress the class war ceased to be an academic question and became a grim reality. Without the spectacular presence of Henri Barbusse, it was a more representative and more effective instrument than its predecessor in New York a year ago. It is obvious that the League depends for its success on uniting all the elements in the country that are opposed to war and the extra-legal violence of fascism. The composition of the Congress shows how far the League has succeeded in drawing together these elements. There were 2,383 delegates from thirty-five states, classified as follows: from trade unions, 343, of whom 121 represented locals of the A.F. of L.; veterans' organizations, 41; professional groups, 44; churches, 25; unemployed, 154; anti-war associations, 193; civil-liberties and defense organizations, 247; farm groups, 55; women's organizations, 121. The Communist Party had 105 delegates; the Socialists, 11. Workers' fraternal organizations and social clubs made up most of the remainder. In addition there were 200 delegates who arrived too late to be classified, and 749 delegates to the Youth Congress, which held separate and most enthusiastic sessions. Altogether the total membership of organizations represented in the general congress added up to 1,607,201; the Youth Congress represented some 200,000 more. In personnel the Congress was a more striking and picturesque body than its predecessor. The type of urban worker which prevailed at New York was diversified by men from prairie, mine and sea.

The Congress opened with a mass meeting in the Coliseum, which in spite of a rainy evening was packed with some 15,000 people. The next two days were devoted to hearing reports from the various interests represented. The international aspect of the movement was represented by Dr. Kurt Rosenfeld, former Minister of Justice of Prussia, General Victor Yakhontov, author of "The Chinese Soviets," and Louis Perrigaud, who came from Paris to represent the World Congress. A long telegram from Maxim Gorky was read, and greetings from Henri Barbusse and Romain Rolland.

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The most dramatic moment of the Congress was the appearance on the platform of representatives of the National Guard and of the regular army in uniform. The latter noted that, with the army being provided with special equipment for riot duty, the primary function of the soldier was no longer to defend his country, but to defend the property of the possessing class. This tendency to make government more and more the tool of the ruling class was emphasized in the resolutions. The complacency with which the highest official circles look upon manifestations of private violence against the workers, such as the raids of the vigilantes in San Francisco, and condone the provocative tactics of the forces of law and order in putting down demonstrations of the people, was remarked as a sinister parallel between the incipient course of fascism in this country and its historical development in Italy and Germany.

The most encouraging aspect of the Congress was its wide appeal, as indicated by the roll of delegates, and the unanimity and solidarity of which its proceedings were evidence. It marked a definite step forward toward that union of radical forces known as the united front. The common cause of self-defense is a natural basis for understanding among them which may develop into a further alliance. One reason for hesitation in joining the American League Against War and Fascism has been the allegation that it was dominated by the Communist Party, primarily for its own ends. The record of the League and the Congress should put an end to such suspicions. It is difficult to see what possible objectives the Communists could have in their participation in the League except to make it as efficient an instrument of defense as possible—of which it may be admitted that they stand in the greatest need. That such efficiency can be promoted only through general adherence of liberal and radical elements under a non-partisan management is obvious. It is true that because of their party discipline, assuring a trained working force, the Communists had a larger share in handling the Congress than any other group, but that they took advantage in any respect of this prominence is quite untrue. Of course, so long as the Communists occupy the most exposed salient in the attack upon civil and human rights they will attract a large measure of attention and sympathy. It is to be hoped that the League has emerged from the period of distrust and prejudice, that it will go forward in the coming year with increasing success as an instrument for elementary social justice and an example of co-operation in the united front.

ROBERT MORSS LOVETT.

Chicago.

Thirty Dollars in Wall Street

IT WAS a thirty-dollar lawsuit that started all the trouble. There was danger it would set an example for others. That is why some of the most dependable Wall Street lawyers were brought into the case. Quite unwittingly, they turned the municipal-court proceedings into a *cause célèbre* of the year 1934. The peregrinations of this case through the courts were carefully followed and reported by the leading financial services and the financial pages of the newspapers. The bondholder finally won, but it was a Pyrrhic victory.

Let us go back to the origins of this affair. It really began in 1927, when the North German Lloyd Steamship Company needed a large sum of money for its huge "Bremen" and "Europa," and addressed itself to some of the guardians of American money, Kuhn, Loeb and Company and the Guaranty Trust Company of New York. The bankers agreed to buy $20,000,000 of the company's bonds at 90½, and offered them to the public at 94, a "spread," as financiers call it, of $700,000.

Of chief eventual importance to investors in these bonds were the arrangements then made to protect them. The bankers were to have plenty of duties, and of course corresponding emoluments, in connection with the bond issue. Kuhn, Loeb assumed duties in two capacities, and the Guaranty Trust Company and its securities affiliate in three. First, of course, they were to be distributors of the bonds to the public. The duties imposed on them were described by a Kuhn, Loeb partner some time before the North German Lloyd bonds were offered to investors. He said:

> The public wisely requires . . . the advice and moral responsibility of bankers. . . . The investor . . . has come to rely upon the tried and tested thoroughness and competence of experienced and highly reputed bankers to protect the interests of the investing public. . . . A great army of small investors has come into existence. . . . The continuing responsibility of the banker for bonds which he has offered and sold . . . is an exceedingly valuable element from the point of view of the small investor. . . .

The small investor, who is a "she" in this story, was also to get protection from the Guaranty Trust Company in its capacity as trustee for the buyers of the bonds and she was also to have the help of Guaranty Trust and Kuhn, Loeb as so-called fiscal agents, receiving from the North German Lloyd the money to pay interest on the bonds and to pay off some of the bonds each year. They were made fiscal agents "irrevocably," and the rates to be paid them were irrevocably fixed in the contract.

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The buyers of the North German Lloyd bonds were thus in enjoyment of the bankers' continuing responsibility as bankers, of their obligations as irrevocable fiscal agents, and of the Guaranty Trust Company's duty as trustee for the bondholders. The bankers were put to the test in 1933, when the company decided to default on the bonds. The company said it was "faced with a critical financial situation." The bankers were called in, and a plan was prepared to make things easier for the company by revamping the rights of the bondholders. Perhaps some of them were unduly suspicious. But in any case they had to take their chances that the plan was good for them as, indeed, the bankers assured them—but without taking any responsibility—that it was. The plan did not describe all the conditions governing the new bonds. Those conditions might not be good for the bondholders. Indeed, when the documents were later prepared, some of the provisions were not for their good. But the bondholders were not to have any real chance to object. They had to take what was offered, as offered, and bear it.

Katherine Perry said she would not bear it. She went down to the irrevocable fiscal agents, and asked them to pay the interest due on her bond. They said they did not have the money. She then turned to a right conceded by everybody in and out of Wall Street, the right to sue for overdue bond interest. She sued for thirty dollars, one-half year's interest.

The Wall Street lawyers of the North German Lloyd brought all their arguments to bear. They asked the court to look at the Treaty of Friendship, Commerce and Consular Rights between the United States and Germany. They asked the court to respect the laws, the decrees and the ordinances of the Third Reich. They said that it had forbidden North German Lloyd to pay the bond interest in dollars, the money in which it was payable.

At the very same time this was said to the court, the company was collecting dollars through the sale of steamship tickets in New York. It was using this money to pay twenty American dollars in cash, on every $1,000 bond deposited under the reorganization plan. This is what the financial district calls a "sweetener," to attract bondholders to a plan they might otherwise not like. A little later, to offset the effect on them of the widely published news reports of Miss Perry's court action, the company added more sugar, raising the immediate cash offer to $40 per bond. While the lawyers were telling the courts that the German government had forbidden the company to pay interest in dollars, the company was telling the bondholders that the $40 "sweeteners" constituted payments of interest, in dollars, on the reorganization bonds if the reorganization went through, on the old bonds if it did not.

One of the firms of lawyers argued that the United States Supreme Court had announced a principle of law fatal to Miss Perry's claim. They said that this principle was announced in a case affecting mortgage bondholders, and that it governed her claim because, as the lawyers said to the judges, she "is a mortgage security holder." The judges did not know that the North German Lloyd bonds were not secured by a mortgage. The bonds were totally unsecured, just ordinary debts. Miss Perry's lawyer warned the court that the "bland" statement of the financial attorneys was "utterly false."

Then the attorneys produced the state and federal Constitutions, and said they would "cite chapter and verse" to show that the underlying law of New York and America was against Miss Perry. They invoked the Fourteenth Amendment to the federal Constitution. But the judge realized that a constitutional amendment introduced to protect the slaves freed in the Civil War could not be stretched so as to protect the North German Lloyd from Miss Perry's demand for thirty dollars.

The lawyers had another argument. They called it "The Gold Defense." They said that this bondholder was not telling the truth when she claimed that she had demanded her interest. But, they added, if she did demand it, she must have asked that it be paid in gold. Then, said the lawyers, her claim must be barred because the United States government had forbidden the use of gold. Unfortunately for this argument, Miss Perry was only asking for payment in current dollars, not in gold.

The court decided in her favor. Then the Wall Street attorneys appealed the case. The appellate court unanimously decided in her favor. The lawyers asked this court to reconsider its decision. But the court refused. Then the lawyers went to a still higher court. They asked its permission to appeal. They said that "public interest, both national and international, requires that the novel and important questions of law in this appeal" should be considered by the higher court. Miss Perry's lawyer, writing brief after brief in court after court, said that "the 'novelty' . . . is due solely to the fact that it has been spun in the intimate recesses of counsel's mind, to which alone it owes its phantasmagoric existence." The appellate court refused to permit the appeal. Then the attorneys for the company indicated that they would take the case to the United States Supreme Court.

This was announced through the press. Other statements were made to the press, all discouraging to bondholders who might dislike the reorganization plan and were thinking of suing for their interest. It was pointed out that any bondholder who did so, would, if he succeeded at all, succeed only "ultimately." It was pointed out that the company was ready to make an immediate cash payment of $40 to those who would surrender their bonds under the plan, while those who did not could sue for only $30, the semiannual interest then unpaid. Even after Miss Perry had won in every New York court to which the case was taken, and had actually obtained her $30, the company denied that it had paid her. The New York Evening Post thereupon pointed out that, "while technically true, the pub-

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lished statement of North German Lloyd . . . is misleading. If the company admitted that it did pay the coupon then those other holders of the bonds who have not accepted the reorganization plan would immediately present their coupons for payment, and the last thing apparently that . . . [the] company . . . wants to do is to meet its debts to American bondholders." The Post said that Miss Perry's coupon was in fact paid by a "roundabout method." North German Lloyd had employed a surety company, which did the paying, and was to be reimbursed by the steamship line.

Other bondholders who sought payment were given to understand that they would have to go through a long legal process in order to get their money. Miss Perry and her lawyer had done it. He had found it necessary to write legal paper after paper. He had prepared a summons and complaint, a motion for judgment, and one or two briefs in every court to which the case went. He had had to study the law as well as the facts of the case, and to appear for argument in one court after another. This was only for the one interest coupon of $30. The North German Lloyd policy of fighting every interest payment would involve Miss Perry and her lawyer, if they decided to try to collect, in twenty-eight more lawsuits for semiannual interest, two a year for the next fourteen years, until the principal of the bond became due in 1947. One wonders whether she or her lawyer will ever again be able to afford the expensive luxury of such a run for her money as the Wall Street attorneys were able to give her.

Another woman who owned a bond got a lawyer to sue. He worked out a plan which he thought might avoid the company's methods of wearing down recalcitrant bondholders. He brought suit for his client's bond interest, and asked the court to let all other bondholders join in the one lawsuit, if they desired. Such a proceeding loomed as a real menace to the Wall Street lawyers. They told the judge that if such procedure were countenanced by the courts, a creditor would be in a position to "vex" his debtor. The judge to whom this and other arguments were addressed decided that they were no good. The company felt it necessary to appeal. The appeal is still pending.

People who own North German Lloyd bonds theoretically have another way around the stone wall built by the lawyers. The Guaranty Trust Company has the power, by the terms of the 1927 bond issue, to require North German Lloyd to pay the principal of the bonds at once, since it has defaulted for so long on its interest payments. But the lawyers could also count on the fact that the Guaranty Trust, supporting their reorganization plan, would not be likely to play with bondholders who turned up their noses at that plan. The trust company did not, and another bondholder is now suing to remove the Guaranty Trust Company from its trusteeship and from its exclusive possession of the right to collect now the money due on the bonds.

In all this fight against too persistent bondholders, the company has had the assistance of some of the most respectable and able lawyers in financial New York. This intensified the difficulties of bondholders who tried to realize on their contract right to bond interest. For example, Miss Perry's task was made much more arduous because her first opponents were the scholarly law firm of Sullivan and Cromwell. This firm retired from the case, in order, they say, not to embarrass themselves in another responsibility. They were criticized for taking part in the case at all on the ground that they had thereby placed themselves in a somewhat inconsistent position. They deny that the criticism was justified.

To Sullivan and Cromwell belongs the credit of patiently elaborating the defenses against Katherine Perry, with a fidelity to their work as deep as if she had sued for millions of American dollars. To them belongs the credit, also, of instituting the appeal procedure that gave the North German Lloyd the fullest protection of the courts. While publicly withdrawing from the case, they still continued as counsel for North German Lloyd in the effectuation of its reorganization. Other Wall Street lawyers, Cotton, Franklin, Wright and Gordon, were substituted to continue that defensive warfare in the bondholders' suits for interest, which was so important a part of the campaign for the effectuation of the reorganization.

Meantime, bondholders may have been wondering why the relief expedition for their succor from the lawyers was so long in coming. What had happened to the continuously responsible bankers, to the irrevocable fiscal agents, to the ever watchful officers of the trust company that is trustee for the bondholders? As far as the eye could see, no banker was trudging across the arid wastes to their rescue. Indeed, it seemed that the bankers had not even sent their lawyers to the scene. But at last, in the far distance, one could descry Davis, Polk, Wardwell, Gardiner and Reed. Here was a sight for sore eyes. The great lawyers for the Guaranty Trust Company had joined in the fray. Not, however, to help the bondholders get their interest. The eminent attorneys came to defend the trust company's job as trustee, the job from which some of the bondholders said it ought to be fired.

What is the prospect before the holders of two or three millions of bonds not yet surrendered under the reorganization plan? They cannot just sit and draw sustenance from the coupons that give them a right to interest, or from the bonds that confirm this right. Those who look forward to bringing repeated lawsuits for fourteen years to come should not be too sanguine. Year after year, as one litigation follows on the heels of another, the financial law firms will be getting more and more bright young graduates from the best law schools in the land. Some day, somehow, some brilliant prizeman from one of these law schools may devise a defense that will stick. Then, the aging bondholder will be sewed up tight. MAX LOWENTHAL.

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EIGHT ENGLISH POETS

This selection from the work of eight English poets (none of them over thirty years old) is the first of four short anthologies to be printed this fall in The New Republic. John Lehmann has edited and arranged the present group. The next of these anthologies, which will appear in an early issue, will be edited by Yvor Winters and will include the work of several California poets.—THE EDITORS.

A Time to Dance

For those who had the power
of the forest fires that burn
Leaving their source in ashes
to flush the sky with fire;
Those whom a famous urn
could not contain, whose passion
Brimmed over the deep grave
and dazzled epitaphs:
For all that have won us wings
to clear the tops of grief,
My friend who within me laughs
bids you dance and sing.

Some set out to explore
earth's limit, and little they recked if
Never their feet came near it
outgrowing the need for glory:
Some aimed at a small objective
but the fierce updraught of their spirit
Forced them to the stars.
Are honored in public who built
The dam that tamed a river;
or holding the salient for hours
Against odds, cut off and killed,
are remembered by one survivor.

. . . All these. But most for those
whom accident made great,
As a radiant chance encounter
of cloud and sunlight grows
Immortal on the heart:
whose gift was the sudden bounty
Of a passing moment, enriches
the fulfilled eye for ever.
Their spirits float serene
above time's roughest reaches,
But their seed is in us, and over
our lives they are evergreen.

C. DAY LEWIS.

Poem

Enter with him
These legends, Love:
For him assume
Each diverse form
As legend diverse
As legend queer;
That he may do
What these require,
Be, Love, like him
To legend true.

When he to ease
His heart's disease
Must cross in sorrow
Corrosive seas,
As dolphin go;
As cunning fox
Guide through the rocks,
Tell in his ear
The common phrase
Required to please
The guardians there;
And when across
The lurid marsh
Big birds pursue,
Again be true,
Between his thighs
As pony vise,
As swift as wind
Bear him away
Till cries and they
Are left behind.

But when at last
These dangers past
His grown desire
Of legend tire,
O then, Love, standing
At legend's ending,
Claim your reward,
Submit your neck
To the ungrateful stroke
Of his reluctant sword;
That, starting back,
His eyes may look
Amazed on you,
Find what he wanted
Is faithful too
But disenchanted,
Your simplest love.

W. H. AUDEN.

Crimea Red

Their masses whiten the shore,
As the green-splashed blue water turns to rose
And Ai-Petri creeps over the sun,
Tatars and Russians, Mongols, Turks,
Twirling spring flowers through the twilight,
Rippling out laughter, ease.

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Their singing rises
As the smoke of the mountain fire,
From the balconies of white villas
Like sculptured blooms among the cypress-groves
Their fathers built for half-savage princes
Day-dreaming of culture.

They have come
From the factories of Moscow and Siberia,
The machine stamping and molten metal
The swelling womb of their world,
From the farms they till in common
Those giant steppes of the North Caucasus,
To this coast of vineyards and roses
To the pine-sweet clinics and palace rest-homes
Breathing the sea.

In the new phase of history,
After the years of the enemy warships
And their brothers hurled from these rocks,
After the first epic of creation
They are taking their ease,
Laughing with flowers from white balconies
Streaming in white by the shore,
Free at last of their fathers' achievement
Their hands will shape for strength to come,
In tomorrow's sun returning
To roaring wheel and workshop and red harvest.

JOHN LEHMANN.

Vizualization of Marxism

Expose the world, anatomize,
Strip clothes from skin, strip skin, then flesh, from bone,
Himself no surgeon, true, can sterilize,
But yet the self-infection can be shown.
Corrode and doubt; anesthetize the heart;
Morphia or curiosity drown the reviving smart.
Clear as white water in the stream we see
Shadowed the species of eternity;
The working process, self a working part;
For not one necessary fiction's grace
Can quite off-mask the observer's outward face
Or thought one extra atom's movement start.

The moving pointer tells, and having told
Not the immediacy of hot and cold,
Nor yet the pale abstraction of a mind
(For algebra and instruments record
No imminent emergence of the Word),
But solid, painful foothold all we find;

Why turn, why seek, why question for an end?
Why hope? Time flows: shows useless to defend
A cosy corner in the rising flood.
The tide is coming in: the dikes are down:
War, Terror, Poverty, swing through the town,
And the cold wind claims to be understood.

JULIAN BELL.

An April Manifesto

Our April must replenish the delightful wells,
Bucket's lip dipping, light on the sleeping cells,
Man from his vigil in the wintry chapel
Will card his skin with accurate strigil.
O frivolous and astringent spring
We never come full circle, never remember
Self behind self years without number,
A series of dwindling mirrors, but take a tangent line
And start again. Our April must replenish
Our bank account of vanity and give our doors a coat of varnish.
Leave the tedium of audits and of finding correct
For the gayety of places where people collect
For the paper rosettes of the stadium and the plaudits.
And you, let you paint your face and sleek your leg with silk
Which is your right to do
As gay trams run on rails and cows give milk.
Sharp sun-strop, surface-gloss and momentary caprice
These are what we cherish
Caring not if the bridges and the embankments
Of past and future perish and cease;
Before the leaves grow heavy and the good days vanish
Hold out your glasses which our April must replenish.

LOUIS MACNEICE.

Elegy

Here, there, everywhere
men stand and stare
waiting and waiting for
something to happen
something to fall
to shake and break the hour
let the sun in
bring joy bring power
some desperate dear door
from their despair.

Then, now, evermore
is watching restaurants, shops,
the phantom rich cars glide,
is stepping aside
for precious ladies for
bankclerk expensive whore
the eyed continual cops,
is knowing and going
the dark destructive pathway of the poor.

This year and next year and
next year and next, no end,
secret the hungers gnaw
stomach heart head
for brightness for good bread
and deeper,
eating stander and sleeper,
for
the kind
the dull last silence of the dead.

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Nothing and nothing is
their lot but empty eyes
drained of all hope, no prize
no golden piercing star,
but only
hands that clench air and hands
pulling the tight belt in
tighter and tighter, pain
only and lonely these
unutterable desolate histories
and lives
exiled from summer silver hails
from all spring leaves.

RICHARD GOODMAN.

Man Under Taurus

The strain of being man upright in the flat world
who treelike bears to heaven from the marish soil
nourished on mud his branches sky-breaking share

a horn of steel exalted from plain land and houses
small bushes near where bulls are kept in chains
and stones between whose cracks his steel foot is planted

man more than man mechanical skyward genius
whose sweat falls, and whose blood, in thirsty drops
extending himself in houses and in fields for evermore

up from the sideways strata of his stepped-upon floor
and the provided openings of death and birth
his eyesight strained upon the beams and spars
a tree whose weighty living is to be not earth.

CHARLES MADGE.

In Defense of Humanism

To M. Salvador Dali

The face of the precipice is black with lovers;
The sun above them is a bag of nails; the spring's
First rivers hide among their hair.
Goliath plunges his hand into the poisoned well
And bows his head and feels my feet walk through his brain.
The children chasing butterflies turn round and see him there,
With his hand in the well and my body growing from his head,
And are afraid. They drop their nets and walk into the wall like smoke.

The smooth plain with its mirrors listens to the cliff
Like a basilisk eating flowers.
And the children, lost in the shadows of the catacombs,
Call to the mirrors for help:
"Strong-bow of salt, cutlass of memory,
Write on my map the name of every river."
A flock of banners fight their way through the telescoped forest
And fly away like birds towards the sound of roasting meat.
Sand falls into the boiling rivers through the telescopes' mouths
And forms clear drops of acid with petals of whirling flame.
Heraldic animals wade through the asphyxia of planets,
Butterflies burst from their skins and grow long tongues like plants,
The plants play games with a suit of mail like a cloud.

Mirrors write Goliath's name upon my forehead,
While the children are killed in the smoke of the catacombs
And lovers float down from the cliff like rain.

DAVID GASCOYNE.

A NOTE BY JOHN LEHMANN

Taken as a whole, these eight poets are well representative of the tendencies to be found in the English poetry of their generation, tendencies very different from those of ten years ago. Each poet has, within certain limits, himself chosen the poem which he considers typical of his best work. Here are some jottings that will identify them to your readers:

Cecil Day Lewis: Born 1904. Schoolmaster. Has published several books of poetry, among them "From Feathers to Iron" and "The Magnetic Mountain," both with the Hogarth Press.

W. H. Auden: Born 1907: Schoolmaster. His collected works have recently been published in the United States by Random House.

John Lehmann: Born 1907. Is the author of one book of poetry, "A Garden Revisited," and one book of poetry and prose, "The Noise of History," both published by the Hogarth Press.

Julian Bell: Born 1908. Has published one book of poems, "Winter Movement," with Chatto and Windus, and one small book since, privately circulated, "Work for the Winter."

Louis MacNeice: Born 1907. Victor Gollancz published his first book of poems, "Blind Fireworks," two or three years ago. He has since contributed poems to many papers, including The Listener, New Verse and Life and Letters.

Richard Goodman: Born 1911. Has contributed poems to various papers, including The Listener, The Adelphi and Cambridge Left.

Charles Madge: Born 1912. Has contributed poems to New Verse, The Listener, Life and Letters and other papers. Appeared with Day Lewis, Auden, Lehmann and Goodman in the prose and poetry anthology "New Country."

David Gascoyne: Born 1916. Has contributed poems to various papers, including The Listener and New Verse.

Two poets who should have been represented are missing: Stephen Spender, because for some time now he has been working exclusively on a long poem, and A. S. J. Tessimond, because since the publication of his book, "The Walls of Glass," he has written nothing that is yet available.

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Washington Notes

Goodbye Forever—Mr. Richberg Becomes the Man of the Hour—A Speech of Soft Butterances

NOW THAT the violent and voluble Johnson has at last departed, it is possible to see this N.R.A. situation a little more clearly. Before dismissing the General from mind altogether, it should be stated, I think, that he was never more amazing than in that farewell address. Better than anything else that has happened, it illustrated how completely obsessed the man had become with his own emotions and complexes. In view of the facts connected with his resignation, in view of the things he has privately said about his successors, in view of the behind-the-scene outbursts in which he has indulged, to make the sort of speech he did make, picturing himself as a martyr crucified in a holy cause, and extolling his successors to the skies, was an almost incredible performance. The fact that the General really believes he was crucified shows the degree to which his vision had become distorted. In my judgment, no more convincing evidence of his complete unfitness for an executive position could possibly have been given than the revealing words in which he said goodbye.

But, enough of the General. The situation he has left is not a pretty one. For a good many weeks the whole N.R.A. organization has been listlessly drifting. Enforcement has degenerated into a joke and the long delay in getting the General to depart without an explosion has created immense confusion and disorganization. Whether out of this welter there can be rebuilt a going concern, with well defined policies and a definite direction, I do not know, but most observers who know the inside of the machinery very much doubt it.

Certainly, if it is to survive at all, Johnson's policies have got to be scrapped and the whole business not only reduced to a compact and manageable size but inspired with a totally different spirit. Whether this can be done remains to be seen. On the surface, it would appear that the reorganization plan of the President is cumbersome, awkward and unworkable. It divides the N.R.A. into three departments —legislative, judicial and administrative—appointing a board of five for each. In other words, the new plan sets fifteen people to do the work formerly done by one. On the surface this seems a splendid way to create confusion and promote inefficiency and futility. However, it seems generally accepted that all three boards will be dominated by Mr. Richberg, who appears as a member only of the policy commission.

Immediately following the announcement of the new personnel, Mr. Richberg was elaborately written up as the new "Assistant President," as the "Most influential man in the administration," as "next in importance to the President" and so forth. However true these descriptions may be, and however flattering to his ego, that type of publicity is not likely to prove very helpful in the long run. I think he will make a better executive than Johnson, for a number of reasons. For one thing, he is far less violent. In addition, he is at heart a liberal rather than a conservative, and is really intelligent, which means, I hope, that he will profit from the lessons of Johnson's failure and abjure the methods as well as the manners of that extravagant and exuberant gentleman. It will take time to tell whether Mr. Richberg can keep his feet on the ground, or whether the sudden and somewhat overwhelming importance given him by the new set-up, plus his position as chairman of the so-called National Emergency Council, goes to his head. Those who know him best regard him as exceedingly shrewd and intensely ambitious. Already, stories of the direction his ambitions take are circulating quietly about Washington, and in some circles they fail to create enthusiasm—to put it mildly.

So far as his domination of the policy board is concerned, that will be entirely easy for Mr. Richberg if he has the complete support of Mr. Roosevelt, but not otherwise. The other members of the board include Secretary Ickes and Secretary Perkins. Both of these officials have minds of their own. They will accept whatever Mr. Roosevelt desires them to accept, but that does not go with them for anyone else. Hence, Richberg's opportunity for domination depends wholly upon the degree to which Mr. Roosevelt makes it apparent that he wants him to dominate. It is expected that he will make this very plain indeed. He will, I think, be compelled to if he wants the new scheme to function.

It is unfortunately the fact that, in his recent radio address, Mr. Roosevelt did not make wholly clear exactly the course to be taken by the N.R.A. in the future; but then, there were a good many things he did not make clear in that speech. In his recent speech, so the editorial approval of the strongly conservative press of the East would indicate, the "business interests," which have been pressing him so hard in the past few weeks, have received the "positive assurances" they demanded. They got some kind words about the President's desire to make business, along with labor, happy and secure, and they got a repetition of his belief in the profit motive, but that is all. They received no assurance that the budget would be balanced, that government expenditures would be reduced, that there would be no further deflation of the dollar or that there would be a return to the gold standard.

Taken all in all, it is difficult to understand what the journalistic spokesmen of the business interests found to cheer. And yet, led by The New York Times, cheer they certainly did. The more analytical and impartial observers here regarded the speech as the least effective of these so-called "fireside talks" yet made by the President. The singular and striking failure to touch upon the gigantic problem of federal relief was the most conspicuous omission, but there were many others that rather detracted from Roosevelt's reputation for frankness. On the whole, the speech lacked the fighting tone of former utterances, and seemed, too, somehow to indicate a diminished confidence in himself and his program. The truth is that Mr. Roosevelt, for the first time since he was inaugurated, is beginning to worry a little. Indications of this have been given at his press conferences as well as in private conversation. It isn't a bad sign. One of the real dangers we have had is too much of this gay self-assurance in the White House.

T. R. B.

Washington.

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Other People's Money

The Securities Commission Takes a Breather—Making the Exchange Safe for Wall Street—Let the President Beware!

CERTAINLY no one can say that up to date the New York Stock Exchange has received any severe jolts from the Securities and Exchange Commission. And from the Federal Reserve Board it has got merely an embrace. It would be proper to say that so far the New York Stock Exchange has won out completely on almost every point affecting its affairs.

As to the Securities and Exchange Commission, however, something must be said. First of all, there are on the Commission at least three members to whom the vast, complicated and even mysterious machinery of the Stock Exchange is, as yet, very little known. These are Commissioners Healy, Mathews and Landis. I think that if I were in their places I would be extremely cautious about thrusting my arm into that little known complexity of wheels and driving rods lest I really disarrange machinery with which I am unfamiliar. I think, however, that all these men can be trusted after a sufficient period to become completely familiar with this strange beast they have been called on to tame.

Judge Healy is an able lawyer who made an amazingly brilliant record in the investigation of the power interests for the Federal Trade Commission. No one who has gone over that amazing tangle of financial skullduggery will withhold from Judge Healy credit for performing one of the most useful and constructive studies in corporate finance ever made. Commissioner Mathews is an economist who has had a liberal training in Wisconsin and is thoroughly familiar with the Securities Act and, in general, with the whole process by which securities get created. Commissioner Landis had considerable experience as a lecturer in the Law School of Harvard University and gave, I think, some courses in corporate finance. He too knows well the Securities Act of 1933. But after all, corporation law and finance are one thing; stock-exchange and economic practice is quite another. But I think we can trust men who could find their way through the mazes of corporate finance to find their way through the labyrinth of the Stock Exchange. Mr. Pecora is a lawyer, but he had two years of digging in the seamy side of stock exchanges and banking operations and has acquired an extensive knowledge of their pitfalls, besides a considerable one of the machinery of the Exchange itself. However, in spite of that, it is a new field and he may be pardoned for proceeding a little gingerly at first.

On the other hand, Mr. Joseph P. Kennedy, the chairman of the Commission, knows intimately the machinery of the Exchange and the habits of the Wall Street mind. But he has begun to think only recently on the other side of this subject and in terms of the social and economic values in the situation.

For all these reasons I have made up my mind to give this Commission a full chance before I utter any serious criticism of its work. I was profoundly disappointed that the exchanges were admitted to registry without being compelled to submit to a rule that would put the government of the floor and the making of rules of trade, so far as the exchanges are permitted to make them, into the hands of a body made up of representatives of all the interests concerned in corporate securities.

The committee of eight advisers named by the New York Exchange to sit with the board of governors certainly does not conform to this requirement. Furthermore, so far as I have observed, no change has been made in the Exchange's method of trying its members on the charges of customers, which, it seems to me, is an unpardonable omission. It is one, however, that it is not too late to correct.

I think one other comment ought to be made. First of all, the Exchange officials, as always, have been applying what might be called the "Terror." To every proposal for a change they have raised the cry of "Beware! You will upset the delicate mechanism of the Exchange. You will kill the Exchange. You will destroy the market for securities. You will produce chaos. Look out!"

This is calculated to frighten men, particularly men charged with grave responsibility in so delicate a moment. My only suggestion to the Commission is that it install a phonograph with a specially prepared repeating record, which would be turned on whenever Mr. Richard Whitney is speaking and which would, at properly spaced intervals, utter the cry "Rats."

But these prophets of chaos have not been without their influence. I have been watching national commissions in Washington for a great many years. And I know that always they function with one eye on their subject matter and one on the White House. Whether the activities of this Commission are feeble and cautious or robust and virile will depend on the man in the White House. At the moment the man in the White House has almost all the eyes he owns turned upon the political situation. His commissions, watching him, turn their eyes too in the direction in which he is looking. Fear that an upset of some sort will be blamed on the Commission and hence on the President and that this will be reflected in votes will enfeeble the hand of this Commission and ruin its reputation in the end. The same course will ruin the President too. This is no time to be clever. Above all things it is no time to play for the good will of the gang that runs the Stock Exchange or the blind reactionaries who have been operating big business. The President has had his experience with these gentlemen. In his first year he made the most assiduous love to them. He made such pals of them that he lost the sincere affection of almost all his liberal allies and friends. And now these men have turned on him, as he ought to have known they would from the beginning. In spite of that he still makes overtures to them. He replies to their criticisms with an occasional sharp sentence but shortly afterwards he then has them around to tea.

The Exchange Commission, of course, had nothing to do with the margin rules. These were promulgated by the Federal Reserve Board. They represent a total loss. Of course, they were to be expected. Control of margins was taken from the Commission and put into the hands of the

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The peril in these circumstances is that the nature of the tax revision resorted to will be dictated by the same selfish interests that have determined American taxation and tariff policy in the past. If that is permitted, the burden of the increase will be laid indirectly upon the very low income majority of the population who do most of the commodity buying, and business in this country will suffer a death-blow. But, if on the other hand, our tax structure is remodelled on a plan which will cut off the unfair escapes and repair the glaring injustices of the existing scheme, the requisite revenues can be realized without crippling business and with far-reaching advantage to our social, economic, and political institutions.

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4. STATE FINANCE, by Professor M. Slade Kendrick (Cornell)

5. LOCAL FINANCE, by Philip H. Cornick (New York State Commission on the Revision of Tax Laws)

6. AMERICAN EDUCATIONAL FINANCE, by Professor John K. Norton (Teachers College, Columbia University)

7. COORDINATION OF FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL FINANCE, by Professor Clarence Heer (University of North Carolina)

8. EUROPEAN PUBLIC FINANCE IN THE WORLD CRISIS, by Professor Gerhard Colm (Graduate Faculty, New School for Social Research)

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Federal Reserve Board at the demand of the Treasury and the Stock Exchange. It was done for the purpose of weakening the Act. The minimum margin requirements as written into the Act came from the President's personal advisers. It would be saying less than the truth if they were described as anything less than absolutely crazy. Even the Stock Exchange itself, favorable as they were, thought that when it first saw them. I protested against these stupid rules at the time. Now I urge that Congress at its next session promptly dispossess the Federal Reserve Board of all authority over margins.

JOHN T. FLYNN.

On the Labor Front

Who Won the Textile Strike?—Labor's Casualty List to Date—Anaconda Strikes a Bargain

THOUGH the great textile strike ended in a "complete victory," according to Frank Gorman, there are many textile workers who will bitterly disagree. Thousands of them have discovered, during the past two weeks, that they cannot get their jobs back. In mill after mill, the managements have openly discriminated against the strikers, locking them out completely at some plants and refusing to rehire the active union members at others. Not without reason, the workers are perplexed over these strange fruits of victory.

When the strike was called off, the textile industry, of course, made no promises whatever as to how it would treat the returning strikers. Thus it is not surprising that, in many instances, the mill managements are making the most of their opportunity to coerce the workers and to break up unionization. The Daily News Record, leading paper of the textile industry, has explained most persuasively the lockouts that occurred, both in the North and South, after the strike: "There must be perfect coordination in a cotton mill, and if the operatives are not mentally set for perfect coördination, it is believed far better not to attempt to open until they are of such a mind." Thus the mills stayed shut until the workers were in a proper mood. As a further aid to "perfect coördination," according to the same paper, mill managers "are frank to say it is absurd to have people working for them who are not satisfied, who speak against the management and create dissatisfaction."

President Roosevelt, to be sure, has appointed a Textile Labor Relations Board for the specific purpose of dealing with such discrimination. But it is highly improbable that this Board can do much good. It is doubtful, to begin with, whether the Board can compel the mills to take back strikers they don't want. But even if the Board does have this power, the mere routine procedure of investigating thousands of complaints of individual discrimination will be a stupendous job. Swamped with these cases, the Board can hardly be expected to act with the speed that is absolutely essential if it is to benefit the jobless textile workers. The fact that the textile board is identical in membership with the Steel Labor Relations Board, and must divide its attention between the two worst anti-union industries, does not lend assurance to the hope that textile grievances will be promptly settled. The Board, it is interesting to note, devoted last week to the steel industry. It certainly looks like a long, cold winter for the jobless strikers.

Faced with this grim prospect, some of the textile workers are going on strike again. The United Textile Workers have ordered the cessation of all strike and picket activities, but despite this, reports of "outlaw" strikes in New England and in the South are increasing. Last week the workers in fifty silk mills in Paterson, New Jersey, walked out, protesting wage cuts of $2 to $2.50 a week, which some of the plants had put into effect during and after the general strike. Another grievance is that the silk manufacturers refuse to renew a year-old contract with the American Federation of Silk Workers. The manufacturers declare that it is not necessary for them to sign a contract until President Roosevelt's newly appointed Textile Industrial Relations Board has made public its findings. Until that time, they will not consider a new contract. The walkout—thus far unofficial—appears to be spreading from one plant to another and may soon force the union to call a general strike, not only to prevent further wage cuts but for its own self-preservation.

A close check on the casualty list in the American labor war has been kept by the Labor Research Association. Since the first of the year, it reports, no less than forty-six workers have been killed. Thirteen were killed in the general textile strike, nine in the longshoremen's strike, eight in the miners' strike. Alabama and South Carolina lead the list with seven workers killed in each state; California and Ohio report five each; Wisconsin, Rhode Island and Georgia have three each; Minnesota, Texas and Louisiana, two; Kentucky, Pennsylvania, Washington, Florida, Arizona and North Carolina, one each. National Guardsmen had been called out in nineteen states and were responsible for nine of the strikers' deaths. Police, deputy sheriffs and private guards accounted for the remainder. Looking over this bare summary, one is tempted to wonder if it is an ironical commentary on President Roosevelt's statement that employers and employees were equally to blame for the labor disturbances of the year.

After a lengthy strike lasting more than four months, some 8,000 Montana miners have won what might be termed a partial victory from the great Anaconda Copper Mining Company. By the terms of the settlement contract, signed with the International Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers, the company grants the Butte Miners' Union a closed shop and raises the basic pay 50 cents for an eight-hour shift—to $4.75. This wage increase is offset, however, by a reduction in the work week from six to five days; as a result, the miners will actually receive $1.75 less per week than before the strike. Moreover, the contract provides that any further wage increases must depend on a rise in copper prices and binds the union to a scale most unfavorable to the miners. For example, if copper goes from 9 to 13 cents—a rise of nearly 50 percent—wages will be increased only 50 cents a day—or, roughly, 10 percent. Such a scale not only permits the company to make an increasingly greater profit, but may severely penalize the

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workers. For if copper jumps 50 percent, many other things that go to make up the cost of living, may go up likewise.

Apart from the dubious gain in wage rates, the strike settlement ignores most of the miners' original demands when they went on strike last May: abolition of the practice of making one man work alone, abolition of piecework or the "contract system," the thirty-hour week, and so on. There is reason to believe that much more might have been won, if the various unions in the building and metal trades departments had not deserted the miners and, in typical A.F. of L. fashion, proceeded to negotiate separate settlements.

WILLIAM P. MANGOLD.

Distaff Sides

The Distaff Side, by John Van Druten, Booth Theatre, September 25, 1934.

THE London importation to be seen at the Booth is an interesting event if but lenten entertainment. Through all Mr. Van Druten's ventures in drama the shine of his "Young Woodley" continues to work in our minds. We remember it throughout the mildness of, for example, this new piece, and keep thinking all along that "The Distaff Side" must somehow not be so mild as it seems. We say to ourselves that surely a pressure is there, something pushing through toward intensity of mood, an edge of characterization, a further dramatic accuracy. Whether these qualities are there to a greater extent than I found them I do not know.

It would be a help if the performance of "The Distaff Side" had been speeded up here and retarded there. Much of the cuing is as placid as tea-time, and for no reason. It would help if actors like Dame Sybil Thorndike and Mr. Charles Bryant—not to group them on one plane, of course—could appear to be thinking, or feeling, on the stage as well as preserving their smooth command of life, or whatever it is that they command. And, finally, it would help if the endless modern sitting around in prose plays could give us more of the sense of inner movement, variation and scope. What we get at present is often, though not always, only a sort of body neutrality. I am trying to say, then, that Mr. Van Druten's play might come now and again somewhat farther into us if varied proportions of bombs, starlight and evening fireside calm were scattered through it. A performance like this that is given "The Distaff Side" is on the one hand too generalized to be accurate and convincing as actuality, and on the other hand too actual to be general. It neither stands on the ground nor flies in the cosmos, is not sharp and particular nor large and typical.

For all that, the play itself needs often to be clinched with words, lines and reactions that are sharper and more immediate to life and more vibrant to the daily surface, as it were, of our speaking. The angles of it need to be searched for all possible acuteness, and the pattern of the scenes to be enforced in outline. The delight of intentional design, to be seen clearly for what it is, is too frequently missing. It is a quality that can be replaced only by a quiver and shot of life, which this play not seldom has not. And yet I should like to see "The Distaff Side" given with pepper, and even a touch of extravagance. That means blade against blade of personality and self-delivery, the flare of one life against the flare of another, along with the heightened surfaces that would arise. It seems to me safe to say that the theory of good breeding which mollifies the cross-currents of this play's dramatic life is somewhat middle-class. As we on this side the Atlantic get the prose British stage, it lacks both the force of the primitive and the freedom of the aristocratic.

"The Distaff Side," a comedy of women, affords us the old grandmother, much spoiled, three daughters, the granddaughter and the old lady's companion. A sprinkling of males qualifies, though slightly, the perpetuity of the distaff's dominance. The distaff's radiance flickers in and out intermittently; its best flash occurs in the relationship between the solid, inspirational sister, Evie (Dame Sybil Thorndike), and the rather erring sister, Liz (Miss Estelle Winwood).

As for the story of the play, it could scarcely be indicated. The mother is a widow resting in a beloved memory, the daughter flutters about and in the end goes off to America and Hollywood with the right young man. Christopher, the dead husband's cousin, loves Evie and asks her to marry him, with that kind of discreet, but never insistent, devotion that novels and plays are wont to portray for middle-aged loyalties. But Evie remains in the end with her memories and her duty, or shall we say remains with what she is?

It would be absurd for me to describe or judge Dame Sybil Thorndike's art from this performance. It seems to have been praised for its serenity. Serenity, of course, like everything else, is partly described by some presentation or implication of its contrary, but we will not go into that. How far a dramatic creation of a quality—serenity for example—will depend on the suggestion of its opposite cannot be discussed here. Certainly Dame Sybil Thorndike's presence on the stage is agreeable, even noble, we might almost say safe, and it is easy to believe that her London characteristics have been vast.

One of the joys of this occasion is Miss Mildred Natwick's old lady. No critic of intelligence could forget her performance in "Carry Nation" a few seasons ago. This extended role in "The Distaff Side," not always written with distinction or given the proper rapport from the other players on the stage, come off well in Miss Natwick's hands. Her performace is a trifle brittle now and then, not always through any fault of hers. But on the whole she proves herself to be, in a certain exact and poignant technical approach, one of our best character actresses, one of the two or three younger students of what character acting can be. She has sweetness to add to piquancy, she brings careful labor to all her drawing.

Miss Estelle Winwood, after three years' absence, returns to our stage as the irregular but consistently ardent sister of Dame Sybil Thorndike's Evie. It may not be good grammar to say that her quality is more unique than ever, but it makes, nevertheless, a kind of sense to say so. The mere observation of Miss Winwood in this role, for tone, pitch, rhythm and unpredictable approach, will show why more people than she might ever have guessed have regretted her absence from our New York stage.

STARK YOUNG.

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CORRESPONDENCE

A Sidelight on a Strike Settlement

SIR: Mr. W. P. Mangold's article in The New Republic of August 8 "On the Labor Front," concerning the Harriman Hosiery Workers, is the first and only truthful article I have read concerning them. We are always accused of elaborating on such affairs.

I was one of the leaders in our strike here at Cherokee Spinning Company, and if I am not badly mistaken we are going to get the same "dirty deal" the Harriman workers got.

The Cherokee employs 600 people, we were 100-percent organized, but when the International strike call came only 300 responded. We were faced with every opposition. Mr. Mebane, president of the mill at that time (he died last week), came through the mill, stopped all the machinery and told the workers that if they came out on strike the mill would shut down and we would all be walking the streets looking for a job. Of course some of the workers believed it.

We held the picket lines for three weeks; the second week the company got an injunction against us. Judge A. E. Mitchell issued the injunction. We could not get it dissolved, although we knew the charges were not true: we have not had any violence at Cherokee. The injunction served the purpose the company wanted it to, intimidated the workers.

We went on with peaceful picketing and parading, the injunction specified that we were not to touch the "loyal employees" or call them "Scab or Yellow Dog."

Mr. Mebane died of a heart attack last week. E. J. McMillan is now president. We returned to go to work Monday morning as our International Union and President Roosevelt asked us to do, and when we started in the front gate we were stopped by the foreman of our department and told that if we wanted to work we would have to go to the employment office and see if any help was needed.

We are not asking for the impossible and we don't want to be unreasonable. We had good working conditions at the Cherokee, we were getting code wages, and we were not striking against the company or the management but against the industry as a whole. We never had any violence in the picket line, we treated the company fair and all we want now is fair treatment and our jobs back.

Our committee called on McMillan yesterday and asked him about taking us back to work. He stated that if we were more loyal to our union than we were to our jobs then we would just have to take the consequences. Do you suppose we will be walking the streets for months waiting for this new board to get started to functioning? I can't have much faith in boards, after seeing what happened at Harriman and Brookside mills.

I don't understand yet what the complete victory we won in this strike is. One good thing we helped to do, was get Strike-breaker Johnson out.

I am afraid the example set by the Harriman and Brookside mills will be followed by all the mills in Tennessee.

LUCILLE THORNBURGH,
Knoxville, Tenn. Local 1758, United Textile Workers.

The Next War

SIR: The review of my book, "The Air Menace and the Answer," which appeared in The New Republic of July 11 over the signature of John Bakeless, contains so many questionable statements that I am asking the courtesy of your columns to answer only a few.

It is claimed that the title may be deceptive because "the author devotes nearly as much space to chemical as to aerial warfare." Does it not occur to the reviewer that chemical warfare as it affects the non-combatant is the menace it is because of its dispersal by bombers? As I point out in my book, time and time again (and it seems that even these repetitions were missed by the reviewer), modern warfare is radically different from previous experience in war because the increasing use of military planes and the convertibility of civilian planes for war use moves the battlefield from the front-line trenches to the strategic cities in the rear. So men, women and children will be gassed and bombed. This is not only the conclusion of my studies in this field. To quote from the report of the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics, 1924, will not only sustain the main thesis of my book but also refute the insinuations which Mr. Bakeless makes in regard to the horrors of the next war which I consistently minimized, but which he feels—without any documentary proof to the contrary—were overdrawn:

> It is safe to say that there will be individual and group fighting in the air; there will be aircraft attacking troops on the ground; both with bombs dropped from great heights and with machine guns mounted on low-flying aircraft protected from ordinary rifle bullets by armor; there will be bombing of large cities, military and manufacturing centers and routes of communication and transportation. And it is proposed that aircraft be used to drop poisonous gases not only on the enemy's troops but also behind the lines and in the centers of population, to the same extent that long-distance bombing will be carried on. The bombs carried may not be limited to explosives and poisonous gases but may possibly be loaded with germs to spread disease and pestilence. Without limitations on the uses of aircraft in warfare a nation fighting with its back to the wall cannot be expected to omit to use desperate means to stave off defeat. The uses of aircraft in warfare would then be limited only by the inability of human ingenuity to conceive further uses for this new agency of destruction.

Since 1924, when this statement was published, government-inspired researches in these various fields assure to the people in the war area a type of warfare little dreamt of in previous wars.

The ostrich attitude on such subjects little becomes the reviewer of this book. In fact, the art of book reviewing should be exercised only by those who have shown the ability to grasp another's point of view and present it to the public without the tincture of personal pique.

Montclair, N. J. ELVIRA K. FRADKIN.

SIR: Mrs. Fradkin's protest would be a little easier to answer if she were more specific as to my "questionable statements." She complains of my criticism of her title, then repeats some statements which are possibly true but entirely familiar, then demands "documentary proof" of the horrors or lack thereof in the next war, and then talks about an "ostrich attitude" and "the tincture of personal pique"—whatever that may mean.

I criticized the title because it did not adequately describe the book. Mrs. Fradkin may be right in thinking that large-scale aerial distribution of gas is possible under war conditions; we do not know because it hasn't been tried. At any rate, chemical warfare is not the same as aerial warfare and the title remains misleading. No one can provide documentary proof of the horrors of the next war because—thank Heaven!—they haven't happened yet. In any case, documentary proof is not possible in a review of five hundred words.

I have not taken an ostrich attitude. In fact, I pointed out most of the real dangers that Mrs. Fradkin mentions in a book of my own, eight years ago. There was no "tincture of personal pique" in my review. Neither the author nor the next war is a personal acquaintance.

New York City. JOHN BAKELESS.

[We think it is clear from the foregoing letters that the real issue between Mrs. Fradkin and Mr. Bakeless is one of temperament and background. Mrs. Fradkin writes, confessedly, as only an intelligent amateur, without practical experience though she relies heavily on military authorities whom she has consulted. Mr. Bakeless criticized her book as one with personal experience

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who has also studied the military authorities, and comes to somewhat different conclusions.

One of the editors of The New Republic has investigated a long list of specific references to passages in Mrs. Fradkin's book which in her judgment support her claim that Mr. Bakeless was unfair to her text. He did not find that these passages offered clear-cut evidence on either side of the controversy. On the whole, Mr. Bakeless seems to have been justified in making the assumption he did regarding the book, though Mrs. Fradkin is obviously entitled to protest that she did not mean to say the things he attributes to her. The very fact that such dual interpretation is possible justifies a criticism of Mrs. Fradkin's clarity.

As to the general usefulness of this book, and others like it, the editors believe there can be no question; and Mr. Bakeless in his original review pointed out the value of the book for "its mass of facts with regard to the application of scientific method to warfare. . . . Mrs. Fradkin . . . has read widely and has had abundant opportunities to consult authorities. . . . She provides [data] to make her book worth examining. . . . Books on this subject are badly needed."

Prophecies regarding the character of the next war are subject to heavy discount—and this is true of predictions regarding the applicability of inventions already in existence but not yet tested under conditions of actual warfare. The vast majority of the military experts turned out to be wrong in their predictions, made before 1914, as to the probable character of any future great conflict. While it is well to hold a healthy skepticism of alarmists, it is equally important to remember that horrible as was the Great War, the next one is certain to be more horrible—as well as the complementary fact that the likelihood of another conflict is greater at this moment than at any other time since 1918. These are truths that cannot be too strongly or too often emphasized.—THE EDITORS.]

More Trouble in Salinas

SIR: A few more facts about the strike of the lettuce workers at Salinas, California, can now be added to your editorial in The New Republic of October 3.

Last week the Filipinos went on the picket line again. They had been off it for about three weeks. The first day, large details of deputy sheriffs and police were called and there was a fracas in which one Filipino wounded an officer in the forearm and another hit a deputy with a sugar beet. That night a machine gun was set up outside the Filipino union headquarters and fifteen officers entered, clubbing sleeping men to left and right. Sixty-nine were arrested for "inciting to riot." The next day both the local newspapers, The Monterey Peninsula Herald and The Salinas Index-Journal, received anonymous notices that "something would happen that night." It did. Four houses of Filipinos were burned to the ground, being fired with "tracer" bullets. Several shots were fired at gasoline tanks near by so that the gasoline would spray the bunk houses and they would burn more easily. At the same time a fire was started in the town so that the fire engines would be busy there and would be unable to come out to the camp some three miles out of Salinas. The next day the leader of the Filipino Labor Union, Rufo Canete—who had taken the place of the deposed leader Marcuelo who signed the arbitration agreement—was arrested and jailed. He is now out on $500 bail. The day after, the Filipinos called off their strike and went back to work in the fields at thirty cents.

One man, Barsatan, was not allowed medical aid for twenty days and has now been removed to an insane asylum. (The same thing happened to a young Chinese in Sacramento, who was beaten into a state of gibbering terror and then carted off to Stockton insane asylum. He wouldn't say he was foreign born. He wasn't.)

The Arbitration Board (Monterey County Industrial Relations Board) has been meeting spasmodically. The growers refused to allow the item from their books revealing the profits they made this year to be read into the record. Their profits are known to be enormous, on account of the drought in the Middle West.

The particular news in this situation is that violence has become so common a method in strikes out here now—particularly illegal "vigilante" violence—that no one says anything more about it. Liberal editors write editorials about the "insolubility of the Filipino problem" as a *race* problem. The growers will tell you confidentially that they prefer Filipinos because they have no wives and families, as the Mexicans have, and they are more skilled in hoeing and thinning lettuce. They have actually been paying the Mexicans as much, at thirty cents, as they would have been paying Filipinos at forty cents. They are doubtless creating an atmosphere in which there will be very little protest—as there has been very little now—at the kind of violence Hitler, Pilsudski and Company have been using.

The growers also say they can easily afford forty cents an hour for lettuce, but the beet and bean growers can't, and so if they pay it for lettuce where will the other farmers be?

Carmel, Calif. ELLA WINTER.

Extracts from Letters

REPUTEDLY liberal tendencies in the new Bulgarian dictatorship, described in our issue of July 11, have been vigorously denied by two correspondents. Charles Gray, a member of the London Balkan Commission, writes us from London, England: "It may be the case that a few ex-communists have received appointments as mayors: I do not know. But the inference that the Bulgarian government has any sort of left-wing sympathies is certainly not justified. I need only refer to the fact that the whole press of the left has been forcibly closed down. 'Imro' stands for *Internal* Macedonian Revolutionary Organization, not *International* Macedonian Revolutionary Organization, as stated by your correspondent. I do not doubt that the richer inhabitants of the Petrich district prefer not to have to pay taxes to Imro as well as to the legal government; but the Macedonian question will not be solved by the suppression of Imro and its leader (Mihailoff, not Michaelor) but by consent on the part of Jugoslavia to grant the Macedonians those minority rights to which they are entitled by the treaty of St. Germain. Of any intention to observe her treaty obligations in Macedonia, there is at present no sign on the part of Jugoslavia."

George Severny, of Jamaica, New York, describes another activity of the present Bulgarian government and urges our readers to protest to the Bulgarian Legation at Washington: "So unwelcome is the new 'authority' government that the spirit of revolt has spread into the ranks of its own army. One hundred and fifty soldiers of the Philipopolis (Plovdiv) garrison are on trial before a summary court-martial. The army prosecutor has demanded sentences of death for all of them. A stroke of the pen has legalized these murders, forbidden appeal and made sure that sentence will be carried out as soon as the trial is over. The 'crime' of the soldiers is their expression of solidarity with a demonstration for world peace held on August 1 of this year."

The position of Catholics on birth control, discussed by Guy Irving Burch in our issue of September 5, has been dissented from by Edward J. Heffron, director of the Catholic Evidence Bureau of the National Council of Catholic Men. "The Catholic Church," he writes, "is opposed to contraception primarily because it is contrary to the natural moral law, because it is an exercise of the sex faculty together with an artificial frustration of the end or purpose of that faculty. Mr. Burch may not regard this as an adequate reason for holding it immoral. But if he does not, neither can he deem it adequate for holding any other sex perversion immoral. It should be sufficiently clear that use of the sterile period, if there be one, is quite different. The parties to the sexual act do not, in that case, *frustrate* the end of the sex faculty; they use it in a perfectly normal fashion and leave the rest to nature, or, in other words, to God, Who ordained the laws of Nature. Our fundamental argument against contraception is that it is a thwarting of the natural moral law; all other arguments we may use are merely supporting arguments and may therefore be refuted without touching our fundamental position. However, whether or not we have in fact sacrificed these supporting arguments is open to question; for it may still be argued that use of the sterile period requires too much restraint for it ever to lead to any appreciable decrease in population growth—and obviously it cannot be biologically harmful."

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Fall Book Section

Novels Till Now: A Pulitzer Prophecy

IT'S BEEN a good year for novels. Running over the list of publications since January, I can think of more than thirty that, for one reason or another, must be given the colorless praise of "outstanding." When it comes to picking out the really good ones, the books that have added a cubit to the stature of literature, I can name two —perhaps three. But one of the two (or three) is Joyce's "Ulysses," and I suppose it's not really fair to count the legitimization of a twelve-year-old bastard as his natal day. Still, even if you don't count "Ulysses," that leaves Thomas Mann's first instalment of "Joseph and His Brothers" and André Malraux's "Man's Fate"—a respectably high total for the year.

In numbers, these "outstanding" novels are about equally divided between domestic and foreign. England, as usual, has the lion's share. R.C. *(not* to be confused with A.S.M.) Hutchinson's "The Unforgotten Prisoner," a better novel than any that Galsworthy ever wrote, deserved much wider notice than it got here. "Magnus Merriman," by Eric Linklater, was a best-seller (which no book ever really deserves to be) in England; it was a little too insular for American taste. John Collier's "Defy the Foul Fiend" was along the same lines but much better done. With "Company Parade" Storm Jameson published the first volume of what is to be a long continued novel—it's never safe to call them trilogies, because then they turn out to be tetralogies or worse. As always, her book made painfully honest reading. Robert Graves's "I, Claudius" was a first-rate historical novel. On the whole, these English books were on a high level of excellence, and not one of them was aimed higher than it could go.

Malraux leads the French list: "Man's Fate" is *hors concours.* Next comes Louis-Ferdinand Céline's "Journey to the End of the Night," which was more of a literary scandal than a good book. And two more volumes of novels-in-progress, both worthy, neither inspired: Romain Rolland's "A World in Birth" and Jules Romains' "The Proud and the Meek." Both of my German nominations, thanks to Hitler, come from outside Germany. It is safe to prophesy, even at this early date, that Thomas Mann's "Joseph and His Brothers" will be one of the great philosophical novels of our age. Feuchtwanger's "The Oppermanns" was good journalism (if you are tired of the term propaganda), but not a first-rate work. Among the Scandinavian books, the find of the year has been Isak Dinesen's "Seven Gothic Tales," but my own favorite was Ronald Fangen's "Duel," which was given a rather condescending reception over here. The only notable Russian novel I recall is Sholokhov's "And Quiet Flows the Don."

When it comes to the American school of hard-boiled fiction, I would award the palm to Dashiell Hammett's "The Thin Man"—more for pace than performance. Thumbs down on Cain's "The Postman Always Rings Twice," a phony if I ever saw one. (It was as gripping as a really good ad, and just as fake.) Benjamin Appel's "Brain Guy" was much more like the real stuff, but too unpleasant to be popular. For historical novels, we had MacKinlay Kantor's "Long Remember," a *fairly* good Civil War story, and T. S. Stribling's "Unfinished Cathedral," a slightly disappointing wind-up of a sound job. Tess Slesinger's "The Unpossessed" and Virginia Faulkner's "Friends and Romans" introduced two new wits. Leane Zugsmith's "The Reckoning" showed that she will soon be up in front with her elders and equals.

F. Scott Fitzgerald's "Tender Is the Night" was the most disappointing novel of the year; it brings tears to the eyes of my generation just to think of it. Vardis Fisher gave us another doggedly struggling volume, "Passions Spin the Plot"; his painful, unliterary honesty is slowly winning him a hearing. "The Shadow Before," by William Rollins, was exciting, and seemed really first-rate until Robert Cantwell's "The Land of Plenty" came along, and showed the whole field a clean pair of heels. Samuel Rogers' "Dusk at the Grove" was almost too good for a prize novel. (As for Stark Young's "So Red the Rose," it appeared during the vacation of the harassed book reviewer, and I haven't had time to read it since getting back.)

Coming to the current crop, we have two first-rate English novels, a whopping great opus of Ruth Suckow's, and a scattering of lesser sheaves. I call Evelyn Waugh's "A Handful of Dust" (Farrar and Rinehart, $2.50) first-rate, but I'd be hard put to it to give my standard of rating. The book is really an ungainly combination of farce, melodrama, comedy and satire, its incongruities smoothly glossed over by the varnish of Mr. Waugh's narrative. It is a pleasure to watch him, he lays it on so neatly. But it's the brushwork rather than the finished job that moves us to these cries of admiration. He may have had some settled plan for this book, but it looks more like a case of showing off. His story starts out to be a comedy of manners, suddenly turns uncomfortably serious, then melodramatic, and ends in a mocking bathos. Dickens would have roared with laughter over some passages, wept manly tears over others, and been inexpressibly shocked by the whole. "A Handful of Dust" is very much a creature of its day: neither one thing nor the other, a mocking society face masking a despairing brain. Its final effect is to make you shudder—which is why, I suppose, I call it a first-rate book. People say: "Oh, but you shouldn't take Evelyn Waugh *seriously!*" Why not?

Thames Williamson teeters uncertainly on that indefinable verge that sets off the "magazine-story" author *(pace* Mr. Somerset Maugham) from the serious writer. This tale of the Pennsylvania Dutch ("D is for Dutch"; Harcourt, $2), without forgoing the implicit local humor of the subject, fits neatly enough into Mr. Williamson's melodramatic formula. But it is not nearly so successful a story as "The Woods Colt," for instance. Mr. Williamson announces it as the last of his "regional novels." I think he is wise, and hope he will find some less artificial scheme for the future. He is too able a writer to go the way of all Ferbers.

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"Now in November" (Simon and Schuster, $2) is the kind of book you speak about with hushed adjectives; but you needn't. Miss Johnson apparently suffered from the common ambition of young writers: to accomplish a book that is not only true and good, but beautiful. It may be true, and some people say it's beautiful, but it's certainly not much good. Her story of a Missouri farm reads like a consciously beautiful translation of a reality only dimly understood. Miss Johnson has bitten off too big a bite of a pretty sour apple, and her attempts to swallow while maintaining a classic composure are one too many for the reader's. "Now in November" is a first novel, so much may be forgiven it, but I don't really think this kind of thing ought to be encouraged. Mr. DeVoto's "We Accept with Pleasure" (Little, Brown, $2.50) must also be written off as an ambitious failure, though a much more considerable attempt. His bulky book is a swan-song for the lost generation of young post-war intellectuals—not the same gang Malcolm Cowley told us about: Mr. DeVoto's rallies round Harvard, not Paris, as a nucleus. "We Accept with Pleasure" is conscientious, documentary, a little wearing. There doesn't seem to be anything else to say about it. Mrs. Stone's "The Cold Journey" (Morrow, $2.50) is an able historical novel, written with just light enough a touch, about the French and Indian War. A gloomy subject, but Mrs. Stone manages to invest it with a kind of civilized sprightliness, which does not detract from its vigorous pioneer air, its darkly barbarous scenery. "Bright Is the Morning" (Smith and Haas, $2.50), Mrs. Williams' second novel, is particularly interesting for its form. It is the story of three men's lives, told "backward," i.e., beginning at the end. By imposing her own limits (the story does not begin with death nor end with birth), she manages to give artistic meaning to some pretty platitudinous facts, and this ingenious method imparts a further irony of its own.

William Gerhardi's "Resurrection" (Harcourt, $2.50) is the other first-rate English novel I mentioned. It is even harder to classify than Evelyn Waugh's. In the first place, it is not properly a novel at all, but a personal record; and in the second place, Gerhardi labors under the same self-made disability Bernard Shaw used to: his reputation for wit clouds his sincerity. To judge by several remarks Mr. Gerhardi lets drop in "Resurrection," he is getting tired of being taken as a humorous writer. The reputation, however, remains, and he continues to give ample cause for it. In "Futility," for instance (a very good book), Gerhardi was paying his respects to Chekhov, but they were very ambiguous respects. So in "Resurrection" he lays his dubious flattery at the feet of another of his heroes, Proust. The book is more than a take-off of the Proustian manner and method, but it does very well as just that. Reading "Resurrection" you cannot get away from the feeling that you are being spoofed—not just some of the time, but all the way through. And unless Mr. Gerhardi is a solemner wit than I give him credit for, this is far from being his intention. In his painstaking earnestness to get everything into this resurrected record of his life, as told to a friend at a London ball, Mr. Gerhardi is at times dull. This makes the parody absolute.

Of course the autumn novel harvest is just beginning, but unless something unexpectedly good turns up, I hereby prophesy that Ruth Suckow's "The Folks" (Farrar and Rinehart, $3) will get the Pulitzer Prize for 1934. There could be many worse choices. In some ways this is the best Middle Western novel yet written; it is certainly the most complete. I think it is far superior to Sinclair Lewis's "Main Street," for instance. Its plan and execution are alike unpretentiously simple: it is the least intellectual book of its size I ever remember reading and at the opposite extreme from "Resurrection." But it is not dull. Whether it is depressing or not depends on the reader: Miss Suckow has done nothing to deepen the gloom. The book is a triumph of complete naturalism. Of course, it's about small-town Iowa, and there's the rub. The limitations of its subject, which really are Miss Suckow's own limitations, prevent "The Folks" from being considered that great American novel which all good reviewers, in spite of what they say, are always looking for. But it is certainly first-rate. The book that really deserves the Pulitzer Prize, but will not get it, is Robert Cantwell's "The Land of Plenty." Failing that, or some dark horse that has not yet appeared, my vote would go to "The Folks."

T. S. MATTHEWS.

Utilitarian vs. Reactionary

THE CHIEF purpose of Mr. Bertrand Russell's latest book[1] is to "trace the main causes of political change during the hundred years from 1814 to 1914." "Freedom versus Organization," then, is a history in the classic sense of "past politics." As description it adds little to the established picture of the times, except in so far as Mr. Russell is a more acute psychologist than the run of historians; but as reflection and interpretation, it has the merit of being written by an eminent philosopher. Mr. Russell, even when he is wrong, is more valuable than mediocre minds when they are right. The chaste style, the pungent and witty biographic characterizations, the sharp-eyed analysis and the wide grasp of facts—all these good qualities will probably give this book a large public. But in both its premises and in its implications "Freedom versus Organization" shares some of the major defects of the very epoch with which it deals. Instead of gilding the lily of Mr. Russell's well deserved reputation, it seems to me more serviceable to examine the blight that touches its roots and weakens many of its stems.

The survey is divided into four parts. Part One deals with the attempted resurrection of dynastic politics under Metternich. This sets the political stage. The second part, called after an ironic phrase of Peacock's, "The March of Mind," deals with the social background of politics in England and with the work of the philosophic radicals and their socialist offspring. Part Three discusses in considerable factual detail "Democracy and Plutocracy in America"; and the final section of the book deals with "Nationalism and Imperialism." The second part is the core and center of the book; here Mr. Russell is at his best, as the critical historian of ideas, for he rightly perceives that ideas, like economic institutions, are also "events" and "forces" in political life.

Mr. Russell's criticism of Bentham and his utilitarian followers is just and appreciative; he realizes their personal limitations, while he demonstrates the temporary strength of their philosophy at the moment when it served most completely the needs of the rising middle class. That there was a gap between the abstract rationalism of the utilitarians, who held free views even on sexual relations, and their practical conduct, Mr. Russell sees plainly. "As for pleasure," he says, "one feels that they had read about it in books." But if one is to understand the tremendous up-

[1] Freedom versus Organization: 1814-1914, by Bertrand Russell. New York: W. W. Norton and Company. 471 pages. $3.50.

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surge of irrational impulses and brutal forces in the nineteenth century, one must dwell more effectively than Mr. Russell has done on the weakness of these bookish philosophers, with their limited range of experience and their narrow philosophy of self-interest, calculation and hedonism, The fact is that these utilitarians had no place in their tidy scheme for the acceptance of pain, for the commission of irrational sacrifices, for the maintenance of unprofitable loyalties, for the uncalculated and the incalculable in human conduct: *hence they did not know the world that they were living in.*

During the period under survey, the organic wholeness of living, in which family affection, religious sentiments, habits of play and other cultural interests were coördinate with the business of breadwinning, was broken up completely: in the new industrialism a manic concern for work and profits was paramount. Those parts of life which could not be exchanged (at a discount) into the utilitarian currency were dismissed as unreal, and flouted. This same divorce was expressed in thought by the division between the Utilitarians and the Romantics. Unfortunately, Mr. Russell is himself so much in the rationalist tradition of Locke and Bentham that he does not deal at any length with the forces of sentiment until he discusses the rise of Nationalism in Germany. But the vital breach that existed was clearly seen by Dickens when he wrote "Hard Times."

Mr. Russell gives far too narrow a meaning to political theory when he devotes so much time to its rational exposition by the Benthamites, and forgets even to mention the widespread European influence of Walter Scott. This is a typical utilitarian mistake, or at least, misemphasis. So, likewise, is the neglect of those overtly romantic movements in politics associated with the rise of the *Félibrigistes* in Provence, and the later regionalists within the so-called united nations—a rise acutely predicted by Auguste Comte when he said that Europe would ultimately be divided politically into one hundred and sixty semi-autonomous regions. Even when Mr. Russell points out the close connection of Carlyle and Nietzsche with the Nazi philosophy of today, or the relation between Darwinism and the rationalized Machtpolitik of the nineteenth century, he does not inquire sufficiently into the meaning of these sanguinary ideologies. But plainly one of the causes of anti-rationalist sentiment was the weakness of the utilitarian philosophy, as it disclosed itself in the practical working out of industrialism. Utilitarianism had never comprehended the depths and recesses of human conduct: its success depended upon its ability to single out and perpetuate a figment, the Economic Man. This monster was a more weird organism than the product of the charnel house that Frankenstein created; but it was no less dead. The fault did not lie in the rationalist's belief in reason: the fault lay in not seeing that before reason can govern it must understand the nature of the elements that it is dealing with. The utilitarians, by taking account only of the calculating man, perpetually upset their own calculations.

I have dwelt on the weakness of the philosophic radicals partly because it must still be reckoned with today. As Mr. Russell wisely points out, the psychological doctrines of these early radicals, like so many other parts of the Manchester philosophy, were incorporated into the philosophy of Marx and Engels: indeed, the inner contradictions in Marx's thought, between his organic conception of history and his utilitarian interpretation of class motives, is due to the unresolved conflict between Hegel and Ricardo. But while Mr. Russell sees the weakness of Marxism in Marx's own unconscious exhibition of national sentiment, he himself instinctively swings back into the opposite early-Victorian error in the very last sentence of his book. "It is not," he says, "by pacifist sentiments, but by worldwide economic organization, that civilized mankind is to be saved from collective suicide." By now, I think, one can say that organization by itself is just as sterile as sentiment by itself. The problem for Mr. Russell, as for the world, is rather—What combination of forces and sentiments will be powerful enough to engender this worldwide economic organization? If one hopes for such an organization without counting upon the drive of collective loyalties and ideals, one might just as well admit frankly that one looks forward to suicide. The correct method is not to deny the existence or value of sentiments; but to create fresh sentiments attached to more appropriate kinds of political and economic agents. In this work art and literature and philosophy and science have as critical a part to play as the more pragmatic economic programs that by their aid will emerge from our present chaos. Indeed, without their aid, one cannot hope for anything but greater chaos to emerge.

The Nationalists and the Fascists, because they have not failed to take advantage of non-economic forces and non-rational adhesions, have been able temporarily to clamp down on or divert the more beneficent forces of social revolution. At present, Carlyle, because of his better understanding of human nature, stands savagely on top of the prostrate mummy of Bentham. In turn, however, the reactionaries grossly underestimate the political weight of reason, of justice, of positive principles, clearly defined goals and ideal forms; *for the reactionary philosophy,* though often strong where the utilitarians are weak, *is no more organic than that of Bentham.* Philosophically, the way out lies in equipping our revolutionary groups with a genuinely organic philosophy: one that recognizes that in any organic activity small quantities, imponderable elements, affects and feelings, may be as important as quantitatively greater economic elements: a fact that is as true in society as it is in the individual organism. A social movement that lacks appreciation of such elements is like a human being whose thyroids and pituitary glands do not function. It is a small matter; but it makes the difference between healthy growth and imbecile inertness. No movement based solely upon hate, self-interest or class exclusions, is capable of defeating the Fascists. When it comes to such matters, the reactionaries have a long head start, greater experience, stronger convictions and more guns. To combat these forces, one must create new centers of social growth. Until they exist in the germ, in the school, in the city, in the family, as well as in the field and the factory, it is doubtful if any group can capture power without being crippled by it.

LEWIS MUMFORD.

Wood Path

He looked: year upon year of gone growth
Covered the stone bone of the old earth.
He bent and lifted a leaf: no leaf,
Only the dry channels of life left.
The deep smell of decay rose round.

But here, under an oak's rough rind,
In a dark wood, in a dead world, life lived.

ALLEN PORTER.

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Pilgrim's Progress

A LONG time ago there was a man named Christian who lived in a doomed city, and he asked himself, "What shall I do to be saved?" His anxiety grew upon him day by day, till at last he took to his heels and ran toward a gate that he saw dimly at the end of a field. "Now he had not run far from his own door, but his wife and children perceiving it, began to cry after him to return: but the man put his fingers in his ears, and ran on crying, Life, Life, Eternal Life: so he looked not behind him, but fled toward the middle of the plain."

In 1913 there was a man named David Markand who lived in New York, in a brownstone house east of the Park, and he kept asking himself, "What is the matter?" He had a good job, a more than comfortable fortune, a wife whom he loved and two fine children, yet he was gnawed morning and night by premonitions of disaster, as if his whole world and himself inside it were waiting to die. One morning, having packed a suitcase and kissed his wife through her tears, he walked out into the dawn. . . . That was the way novels used to end, the hero escaping with a sentimental flourish. Waldo Frank tries to tell us what happens afterwards.

"The Death and Birth of David Markand"[1] is the story of a four years' pilgrimage through America in search of life. It is unlike Christian's pilgrimage in that Markand doesn't even know the path he should follow, much less where it will lead him; and unlike it also in respect to the goal he attains (but of this more later). Another difference is that Markand is not allegorical: he is a real man wandering through a vast countryside copied from nature and meeting with other men whose names or faces we often recognize. But these landscapes or figures have to play a double part, to convey a symbolic meaning in addition to the meaning they have in themselves. The whole book becomes an allegory of man's soul under capitalism, just as "Pilgrim's Progress" was an allegory of man's soul under the Stuart kings.

Thus, Markand first returns to the farmhouse where he was born (near Waterbury, in a real Connecticut), but his journey there is also the instinctive seeking of an unhappy man for the security of his mother's womb. As if to point the lesson, this section of the book is called "The Mothers." The womb will not have him; the old home casts him out, and Markand begins to drift over the face of the country, west to Kansas among the rebellious farmers, north to Chicago (which is Vanity Fair), and south to Alabama, where, in an empty love affair with the wife of a pork packer, he touches the lowest point of spiritual degradation that a man can touch and live. ("All the world was a black river; and a river flows down. And he and Theodora, each alone, were at the lowest bottom.") This section of the book is called "The River." In the next section, "The Mountain," there is a change of mood. Markand meets a labor leader and follows him northward through the Appalachians, till at last the miners strike in the Kentucky coal fields and the labor leader is killed. Markand, surviving, finds a new life and a new faith.

I have a hard time writing about this novel. On first reading it, I admired its scope and its close texture, but I was repelled by the style in which the more emotional passages are written, by words like slumberous, gravid, lumberly, saturate (as an adjective), lissom, acerb, and phrases like "the aromatic air tumescent of shafting pines." Several of the characters are softened by appearing in a symbolic haze, and I feel that a novelist should have too much respect for the integrity of the people he is writing about to make them symbolize anything more or less than themselves (a symbol is always less than a human being). David Markand himself is more than a symbol, but he is passive, selfish, hysterical, and makes a singularly unattractive hero. It is true that the book improves in retrospect. The irritating mannerisms are forgotten; you remember the wisdom they at first conceal and begin to appreciate the outlines of the task that the author has set himself. Waldo Frank is a novelist who writes to be read twice, and I am glad to pay his work this tribute it requires. Yet even now I feel that there is something discordant in his new novel, something that lies beneath the faults and virtues apparent on a first reading.

The new life that David Markand finds at the end of his pilgrimage is that of a worker, and his new faith is the militant socialism of 1917 (in 1934, it would have been communism). But the steps by which Markand reaches this goal are steps that usually lead in an opposite direction. His spirit is that of a lonely pilgrim, a mystic waiting for the divine Voice to speak and the divine Hand to inscribe a message on the tablets of his heart. Any theologian would recognize some of the states through which he passes—the "searching," the "retreat" into himself, the feeling of a "vocation"—then the relapse into sin, the vicarious atonement, the blood sacrifice, and finally the rebirth by a sort of baptism. There has been a great deal of argument on the subject of whether communism is a religion, and the answer naturally depends on how religion is defined. But there is one thing certain: it is not that kind of religion, not a City of God to be entered through the gates of repentance and rebirth. It is not a state of being; it is a way of achieving certain ends by uniting and working hard for them.

This contrast between mysticism and communism becomes especially clear at the climax of the story. In a mining camp high in the mountains, John Byrne and Jane Priest are leading a strike; Markand, their friend, is keeping house for them. The strike is betrayed. John is mutilated, Jane raped, and both of them are killed. Markand, badly beaten, escapes with his life.

When strike leaders are beaten or killed, there are certain things that have to be done quickly—newspaper stories have to be written, meetings held, public opinion mobilized, money raised to carry on the strike. Waldo Frank knows this; and I remember that with his head bandaged after a beating by a Kentucky mob, he worked harder and more self-effacingly than the rest of us to get help for the strikers. His hero, in a similar situation, was vastly more selfish; leaving the Kentucky hills behind him, he wandered northward, living in a dream. "When he was hungry he ate. When the dark fell, he found a lodging place. . . . He was alone, utterly: a point of awareness he was, within a void, a point of awareness of his own solitude." Perhaps this self-absorption was a result of his injuries and the delirium that followed them. But a few days later he recovered his strength and returned to the grave of Jane Priest and John Byrne, and still he did not think about the strikers.

He stood there, within a wreath of mountain, and a voice came to him, much as the spirit comes to Quakers in their meeting houses. "I envied you," he said to his dead friends, "knowing how different I am. I will no more envy you. I will be like you. I will do like you. . . . I embrace

[1] The Death and Birth of David Markand, by Waldo Frank. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. $2.75.

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your class. All men who want to live today must embrace it. My own life needs it to live. I have only the dead body of a class that dies: I need, that I may live, the living body of the class which now is life."

I wish there were space to quote the whole of this sermon among the mountains. It is simple in language, rich in feeling; it deserves a high place in the literature inspired by the revolutionary movement. But the reader can't help making a reservation: he can't help feeling that Markand, at the very moment he is promising his friends to be and do like them, is actually betraying the cause they lived for. John Byrne and Jane Priest died to give the miners freedom; David Markand is deserting the miners. He will fight for them later, perhaps in another novel, but for the present he is going back to his family in New York.

This contrast between word and deed is only the strongest symptom of a disharmony in the author's mind. Waldo Frank is the most ambitious of living American writers. He is perhaps the only one who has tried to fashion for himself a unified and intelligible career—not merely to develop a method or describe a single field of human relations, but to build a whole philosophy and, on this basis, to proceed so that each new work will be a step in a chosen direction. Waldo Frank is a proud writer: he has tried to reach a position of intellectual leadership, not by grasping it or advertising that he owns it, but patiently, by earning it. Sometimes he is too proud to acknowledge to himself that he has been mistaken. He has changed his philosophy in recent years, changed his direction, but he is still trying to fit the new material into an old structure. He is trying to make a working agreement between mysticism and realism, between Spinoza and Marx, between "Pilgrim's Progress" and the proletariat, and the two sides won't be reconciled.

MALCOLM COWLEY.

The Course of Empire

To the North! by Jeannette Mirsky. New York: The Viking Press. 406 pages, illustrated. $3.75.

Eskimo Year, by George Miksch Sutton. New York: The Macmillan Company. 333 pages, illustrated. $3.

Arctic Trader, by Philip H. Godsell. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 328 pages, illustrated. $3.50.

MRS. MIRSKY'S excellent popular history of Arctic exploration comes at a time that is in one sense very auspicious and in another curiously inopportune. Great deeds have been done and great names noted in the course of Arctic adventure in the past, but we have reached a point where these exploits are no longer of much value as a guide to future activity in those regions: the moment is one in which all our conceptions of the methods and the aims of such endeavor are changing even as we watch. Add to this the fact that already, mainly in Russia, a considerable amount of work has been done in the past few years which seems perfectly to typify the new method of attacking the Arctic, but of which only the most incomplete reports are as yet available, and the reason for the divided opinion that must be offered on Mrs. Mirsky's book becomes clear. As a summary of past achievement it is concise, well balanced; as an indication of future (even present) accomplishment it is indecisive, incomplete and indeed perhaps likely to be misleading. It was some such judgment as this, I take it, which Vilhjalmur Stefansson intended when he remarked in his preface to the book that he commended Mrs. Mirsky's handling of her material, but disagreed with almost all the conclusions which that material suggested or led to.

This exception noted, it must be conceded that within its limitations the book is admirably conceived and capably executed. Beginning with the almost legendary exploits of Pytheas, the Greek, who is supposed by some to have visited Iceland in the fourth century, B.C., it manages not only to condense into one volume a compact but remarkably circumstantial account of all the principal expeditions undertaken thenceforward almost to the present day—no small feat in itself—but also to indicate the successive phases through which the whole course of exploration passed in that time: the hunt for the Northwest and Northeast Passages from the Atlantic to the Pacific, which engrossed all attention from the sixteenth century on down to the beginning of the search for the lost Sir John Franklin and his party toward the middle of the nineteenth; the growth in geographical and scientific interest which that search inspired, so that the solution of Franklin's fate, and even the completion of both the long sought "passages," came in distinct anticlimax to the vast gains, territorial and otherwise, which had meantime resulted; and, finally, the sudden subordination of all other interests to the purely sporting one of attaining the Pole which, instigated by such adventurers as Andrée, Cagni, Peary, etc., has confused the popular understanding of the purposes and validity of Arctic research to this day—these varying influences are described in their just relation one to another. Moreover, since her practice has been to base her account, wherever possible, on the actual journals of the explorers themselves, the author has been led neither into the false heroics nor into the excessive moralizing which has characterized similar compilations in the past, and her work gains immensely in dignity and solidity.

But this, again, leads us back to the question of the book's limitations. These are tales of hardship, danger, tragedy, of individual heroes battling against an unknown enemy, and since the whole purpose of exploration in recent years has been the elimination of these factors, and the abolition of the concept of the North as an enemy, it is obvious why the book's emphasis must be chiefly on the past. Yet one feels that, to any but the most melodramatic minds, it is precisely in the present that the most exciting story lies. Twenty years ago Stefansson (whose name is likely to loom larger and larger as time goes on) proved by actually doing it that man can "live off the country" anywhere in the Arctic. Productive year-round colonies are already established at points far north of those which men died, even fifty years ago, to attain. And in Siberia, at the present moment, a system of mass penetration of the Arctic is under way, comprising some score of operating bases and involving ice-breakers, airplanes and sledges in a coördinated endeavor beside which such pretentious but narrow-focused efforts as the Byrd Antarctic Expedition seem important chiefly as a last grotesque gesture of an individualistic age. But of all this, even in implication, and despite its inspiriting title, Mrs. Mirsky's book gives no account.

The two remaining volumes are cited here chiefly to supplement the picture Mrs. Mirsky's book presents. Dr. Sutton's "Eskimo Year" is a record of his stay on Southampton Island, at the mouth of Hudson's Bay, and just inside the Arctic Circle. He went there in pursuit of ornithological study, but once there he found abundant time to study the island's Eskimo inhabitants, their habits, occupations, etc. Told in rather a coaxing style, but honestly and clearly, it provides that picture of life and conditions in the Arctic which "To The North!" lacks.

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"Arctic Trader" is precisely what its title implies. The Hudson's Bay Company, practical ruler of all of Arctic and sub-Arctic North America for over two hundred years, has the distinction of having done almost nothing in all that time, except in the way of its own trade practices, for the furtherance of that region. (Even at the time of the Franklin search, of the forty-odd expeditions sent into its own territory, the Company only had four in the field.) Told from the inside—Mr. Godsell was in the Company's service for over twenty years—the book is chiefly interesting as a record of that huge organization's functioning in the field, its driving power, its fierce monopolistic practices, etc.—the more devastating in effect for being told with the author's so evident appreciation.

ROBERT M. COATES.

Belated Torch Song

The Challenge to Liberty, by Herbert Hoover. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 212 pages. $1.75.

BRANDER MATTHEWS used benignly to remark how Youth, ah him, was ever radical, reckless, flaming. He had never been. Old bawds who have never known passion or ever forgotten price have wept into their gin over the trials of Manon Lescaut. Veteran scabs have communed in bitterness concerning the company's injustice to some faithful servant. And now Herbert Hoover, the hero of Anacostia, emerges from his sunkissed umbilical contemplation in the depths of California to speak in praise of Liberty, to condemn current infringements upon it by government and to declare his faith in its ultimate triumph. His praise, his condemnation and his declaration he has incorporated in "The Challenge to Liberty." His victory at Anacostia Flats, that unforgettably brightest deed of his star-gemmed career, he has modestly chosen not to mention.

Thus, sentimentally and reminiscently, run this reviewer's reflections as he muses over Mr. Hoover's latest written work. But such reflections, pleasant enough in their way, do not of course explain or expound or define the book's significance. To do this one must seek a more substantial critical level.

Mr. John Chamberlain has said that the writing of "The Challenge to Liberty" was inevitable, and I incline to agree with him. I don't agree with him, however, in seeing the book mainly as an attempt at self-justification on Mr. Hoover's part. To me it seems that the work is best characterized by the word *incantation.*

My hypothesis of the genesis of the book is simple: In times of intense social travail aberrations beset those whose social liquidation seems to impend. Old orders jerking in terror mortis keep their beneficiaries from sleeping well of nights. Doomed folk wake in dread, walk in shadow. Comes a point when the articulate of them seek by incantation to dissipate the gloom.

The old order has been evoking incantations for some time. It has evoked them from Mr. Hoover. As President he tried to accomplish relief by advertising, price stabilization by exorcism, and prosperity by autosuggestion. Incantation is in his line. Lately the old order's choreic spasms have made it needful to weight the bedclothes with bullets. No wonder, then, that Mr. Hoover has been moved freshly to cry forth in eleven chapters of magical wordage. And no wonder that his chant should be keyed to an invocation of the goddess of Jefferson and the Early American freeholders, whose memorial image adorns the symbol of that class Mr. Hoover represents and serves.

One remembers an occasion when Mr. Hoover, by alchemic verbiage, tried to turn a pile of bad debts and haywire into the illusion of a twenty-year national plan. The same deft touch is manifest everywhere in "The Challenge to Liberty." A perspiring shaman, Mr. Hoover labors ritually to impart an illusion of relevant reality to the goddess, and to bring within the shelter of her robe all the hallowed devices by which the products of labor have accumulated in the hands of himself and his class-fellows. He prayerfully dismisses the cleavage of classes as an apparition caused by evil spirits. He conjures up entities—Dictatorship, Regimentation, Communism—and animates them with simple principles composed entirely of phonetics—ambition, bureaucracy, hate. To these he opposes the lady Liberty, with her ethereal skirts bulged like a shoplifter's with conglomerate responsibilities toward the politico-economic order favored by himself. Once, in connection with an itemization of the Bill of Rights, he mentions by implication the expedient violation of workers' rights that is the invariable rule in class warfare. Then neatly he disposes of it to his own feverish satisfaction: "We have at times," he says in this connection, "failed to live up to our ideals, but that they shall continue to shine brightly is the important thing." Not the substance of rights, in other words, but the untarnished fiction of their existence. Forget Mooney and bay the moon, while Jefferson Paine Hoover's Liberty Boys of 1934 slap you with a blackjack and go through your pockets. Mr. Hoover's Liberty is indeed a thing of the spirit, as he insists on several enraptured occasions in his book, and the perfect brand to be carried on the hip by the vigilantes of the state he has chosen for his own.

Mr. Hoover brings to his inspired role a prodigious aptitude for ignorance that peculiarly fits him for the part. One notes this particularly in that phase of his druidic passion where, in conformity with tradition, he limns the lineage of the goddess he invokes. It is apparent here that he had read nothing in English history beyond the mode or perception of Lingard or Greene, or that if he has read anything else it did not take. His American history is that which is available in the usual grammar-school textbook: never, not among the deathless gods, did pure thought operate in pure being to the extent it did among Mr. Hoover's fathers of the Republic. Doubtless he would regard Charles A. Beard as a Bolshevik hireling and a slanderous scoundrel. And when one comes to that place where he deals with "the raw materials of human nature, from which its motivations or human drives arise," one is face to face with a stereotype from, at the latest, Spencer: "If we examine the characteristics of human nature and human behavior," he says, "we find they are mostly born in man and change but slowly. . . . There are such evil instincts and impulses (etc.). . . . There are the altruistic instincts and impulses (etc.). . . . But . . . one thing can be stated in finality. . . . There can be no human thought, no impulse to action, which does not arise in the individual. We might as well talk of abolishing the sun's rays if we would secure our food, as to talk of abolishing individualism as a basis of successful society." And he ends his exposition with the more definite warning: "For at least the next several generations we dare not wholly abandon self-interest as a component of motive forces to initiative, to enterprise, to leadership."

And that, to me, dear reader, represents no human thought arising in the individual, but the exigent cry of a harried member of the possessing class trying to protect his rear.

MURRAY GODWIN.

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A Page About Poets

Gilgamesh: Epic of Old Babylonia. A Rendering in Free Rythms, by William Ellery Leonard. New York: The Viking Press. 89 pages. $2.

THE EPIC of Gilgamesh, half-legendary king of Babylonia, is the oldest poem in the world. About 2,000 B.C. it was engraved in cuneiform on twelve clay tablets, the fragments of which are now in the British Museum. With great freshness and beauty it deals with the great central themes, life, death, love, friendship, heroic combat, beasts, Gods and men. Here for the first time are the flood, the serpent and the tree we know in Genesis.

William Ellery Leonard's translation, based on the German of Ranke, gives form to the noble and moving story of Gilgamesh, the matchless, and his friend Engidu, the wild man of the forest, friend also of lions and gazelles. But when he met the priestess in the wood and loved her seven days and nights, he understood the wild beasts no more and she led him forth to fight Gilgamesh. But the two warriors became friends at once, and set out together to destroy the monster Khumbaba. They had marvelous adventures, but in the end Engidu fell ill and died, and Gilgamesh, distraught, set out across the world, beyond the abode of the gods, to find him again and conquer death. He meets Utnapishtim, a Babylonian Noah, who tells him the story of the flood; he finds the plant of immortality, but is bereft of it by the serpent. He sees for a moment, at last, the shade of Engidu: "I will not tell thee, my friend . . . what I have beheld. Thou wouldst sit down and weep all the day . . . My body that thou hast clasped, so that thy heart was glad . . . in dust is it sunken away, in dust is it sunken away." Mr. Leonard's fine version is an addition not only to our knowledge of that remote past, but to English poetry.

CLARA G. STILLMAN.

Amaranth, by Edwin Arlington Robinson. New York: The Macmillan Company. 105 pages. $2.

To read Edwin Arlington Robinson's eighth blank-verse narrative, the allegorical "Amaranth," is a painful experience when one remembers the true flame that burned once in his short dramatic lyrics. Not even his occasional flare of sardonic wit can survive the odor of decay that smolders up from the ghoulish symbolism of his poem, the scene of which is a spiritual purgatory of delusion and misdirection. Evensong the musician, Pink the young poet, Dr. Styx, Fargo "who tried once to paint, then in answer to God's call made pumps" (all of them haunted by the voice of conscience, Amaranth), are even less dynamic as characters than are Mr. Robinson's Arthurian romantics, and his New England types in "Captain Craig" and "Talifer." The compulsion that called forth the writing of "Amaranth," however projected, doesn't keep the poem from being, primarily, a most pathetic revelation of the bitter—yet heroic—self-doubt in the mind of a poet who once struck genuine fire, knows that he did, and fears that he never will again:

> The sorrow of it is that only rarely
> Are we to know, until we are too old
> Or too unstrung to care.

RUTH LECHLITNER.

Threshold and Hearth, by Marya Zaturenska. New York: The Macmillan Company. 68 pages. $1.50.

Not religious in their intention, the poems of Marya Zaturenska are nevertheless spiritual in the impression they give of a mind dwelling in a state of revelation that is poised, meditative and sincere. Her imagery, taken with grace from nature, is without any taste for forced contemporary symbols. Being under no compulsion to write like a conscious modern, Miss Zaturenska draws her poems from a source alive but private, and she does so without apology. Usually her practice in words is alert and right. Occasionally her vigilance is relaxed; there is a too instinctive reliance on the word *silver* and its lyrical suggestiveness, and sometimes an overabundance of even well chosen adjectives. It is not, however, a style that is decorative to the disadvantage of the content. She has the ability, as in "Image in a Garden" and others, to remake a special and extramundane experience into a concrete poem of fine overtones. She refines her vision into mellowness of speech and feeling. "Things unformed and shapeless sharply move toward greater love." It is a mood of lyrical and mystical harvest. Her poetry is securely subjective but escapes from the merely personal into superior meanings as in the last and moving lines of "For the Seasons" and in "Landscape." Subtle without device, sensitive but sound, it is feminine poetry in a day when women are tempted to write like men.

HILDEGARDE FLANNER.

Starry Harness, by William Rose Benét, New York: Duffield and Green. 111 pages. $2.

Much of our modern verse is in its nature the poetry of the dispossessed of the soil—or rather the children of the dispossessed, who, never having had any real contact with the earth, remain unaware of their deprivation. On the rock of Manhattan, roots strike asphalt or ramify into subways. If the poet's consciousness reaches toward the natural world it is likely to send sparkles starward or go out to sea. In William Rose Benét's long narrative poem, "Rip Tide," the sea washed over almost every page. Even in an inland room one was made to hear its "exiled music." And the sea was not used as a backdrop against which to pose his figures, for they were related to the sands and tides between which they were tragically shuffled. In that poem I felt the beginning of the wave movement of an advance that is still more noticeable in his latest book of poems, "Starry Harness." Here the vision spirals and twirls, weaving a pattern of the forces of which matter is fabricated, from sand grains to man whose " . . . life is one long daring, Toward light, forever light forswearing."

This poet registers vibrations of his age, but he does not seem to be spiritually beleaguered by its problems as, for instance, does Horace Gregory in his arresting book, "No Retreat." The American panorama passes by; Mr. Benét is touched by its concrete edges or aroused by its stupidities, but his most pregnant lyrics come from some still core into which the outer world has been unable to penetrate. "Starry Harness" is Mr. Benét's most important book. Although it is uneven, it has throughout a fresh, fervent and soaring note. It gives a sense of fluidity and of things yet in the process of becoming that contain potential surprises.

LOLA RIDGE.

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Some Recent Fiction

Babouk, by Guy Endore. New York: The Vanguard Press. $2.

Black God, by D. Manners-Sutton. New York: Longmans, Green and Company. $2.50.

> Our historians, who always shout reign of terror when a few rich people are being killed and see nothing worthy of comment when poor are slaughtered by thousands . . . cry out unanimously "The pen cannot describe the cruelty of these savages."
>
> My pen is not so delicate. It can say, it will never cease to say: "Not over a thousand or so whites were killed in this reign of terror, while the legal and protected slave trade killed a hundred thousand Negroes a year. Buried its victims in Africa and America and strewed them over the Atlantic."

NO REALIST can quarrel with the intention expressed in these words from Guy Endore's savage and terrible novel of slavery and revolt in San Domingo. But the more highly he approves the intention, the more it may seem to him a pity that Mr. Endore's sensationalism, his frequently flashy and rhetorical writing and his almost obsessive preoccupation with horrible, macabre and sadistic detail should weaken to some extent the credibility of a story largely founded on fact. "Babouk" is a horrible and an unforgettable book, but it somehow misses being a great, tragic or memorable one, despite its important and tragic material and the occasional power and intensity of Mr. Endore's writing.

This is all the more disappointing because Mr. Endore's material would lend itself so easily to a magnificent novel of epic proportions—a novel particularly timely in view of the fashionable agrarian nostalgia for the peculiar institution—or, on the other hand, to a soberly and thoroughly documented history of the Caribbean slave trade. Mr. Endore has written neither. He merely escorts us personally through a Chamber of Horrors, making sure we miss none of the nauseating or titillating exhibits, and bids us enjoy ourselves.

Very different is Miss D. Manners-Sutton's treatment of somewhat similar material in "Black God: a Story of the Congo," also dealing largely with cruelty and black magic. Because of its smooth, urbane, mildly ironical and often whimsical style, it seems to have reminded some of Miss Manners-Sutton's readers of Anatole France. She is smooth, urbane and mildly ironical about a black man called M'Kato who sat on the bank of a Congo river for twenty years, evil-wishing a white planter in a distant province, whose death he more or less (as Miss Manners-Sutton more or less ironically suggests) brought about in this way; about a simple, kindly old Catholic priest, a flamboyant prostitute with a more or less golden heart, a slightly ridiculous Protestant missionary couple, a witch-man, a philosophical trader, a forgotten man or two and other stock figures not infrequently met in tropical fiction. It is all very suave and mellow and unimportant. Miss Manners-Sutton, like Mrs. Millin and others among her contemporaries, relies on a rather diluted version of the famous Francian formula, pity and irony; and like these others she shows what a synthetic thing this compound becomes in the hands of France's imitators.

MARTHA GRUENING.

Dusk at the Grove, by Samuel Rogers. Boston: Little, Brown and Company. $2.50.

PRIZE novels—and quite rightly, I think—are suspect. Like a successful candidate for President, a winning manuscript must be inoffensive to the majority; its most important qualification is this negative virtue. Mr. Rogers' "Dusk at the Grove," which has won the $10,000 Atlantic Monthly-Little, Brown prize for 1934, has this necessary innocence (leftists will call it "this necessary irrelevance"), but the point of its being a prize novel need not be too heavily rubbed in. It is also a good book, which is more than can be said for most of its be-laureled peers.

Perhaps, without the forced draught of advertising (don't forget that a publisher is in a spot with a prize novel: he has to boost it hard to get his money back), "Dusk at the Grove" would not have attracted much of an audience. We may be glad that it will, for we all need the encouragement of a little occasional injustice. Mr. Rogers is to be congratulated for killing two birds of such different feather with one stone; it isn't done every day.

"Dusk at the Grove" is the story of a family who come back every summer to their old place in Rhode Island—first as children, then during the disturbing years of war-time and growing up, finally as the new older generation, who will soon not be coming back any more, for the old place has to be sold. Mr. Rogers' characters, it is rumored, are real people. The rumor is false. The place he writes about is real, as only a landscape transfused into the imagination can be; the figures that inhabit it are the shadows on its rock. "Dusk at the Grove" is a farewell; it is not about today, or tomorrow, but yesterday. It is nostalgic in a deeply personal sense: this American countryside, peaceful, traditional, beautifully old-fashioned, is being invaded by a new spirit that threatens everything. Mr. Rogers has made his adieux with charm and grace. But he is too intelligent and sensitive a writer not to realize that there are other landscapes and more enduring figures. T. S. M.

The Laughing Journey, by Thomas Lennon. New York: The John Day Company. $2.

Mr. Lennon likes to believe that the soul of the average Irishman is "stuffed with the laughing sorrow which is the heritage of the Irish." This first novel is a fine demonstration of that belief, being full of sound and Irishmen and signifying, to a great extent, the temperament of his race. Though born in San Francisco, the author is as Irish as a policeman, but a hundred times more articulate. The tale he tells is a happy, Jurgenesque one about a Robin Hood sort of fellow named Shane Erskine, whose ambitions are as wide and as long as Ireland, and whose laugh sounds like a warm place in Wagner. Shane was a fighter, but he fought no small fry. His short life was spent in organizing forces to beat the British and win Ireland's independence. Despite all the money raised by the prosperous Irish saloon keepers of San Francisco for his rebellion, it was a dismal failure because Shane fell down as an actual revolutionist. But this did not prevent him from becoming a grand martyr and being mourned by Rosaland Fair who, like all beautiful Irish women, was "the most beautiful girl of Ireland." The writing is zestful enough to get the Irish excused for almost anything. J. M.

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Dew on the Grass, by Eiluned Lewis. New York: The Macmillan Company. $2.

This evocation of a childhood, though it is somewhat obscured by the mists of nostalgia, comes out clear in its details and is touched up into animation by humor—unconscious in the four child characters, delicate and lively in the author. Lucy and her brother and sisters are warmly protected in their life at Pengarth, a farm estate in Wales, and their adventures are simple but colored with the bright colors of Lucy's poetic imagination. They are companioned invisibly by such creatures as the Toothless Hag, who appeared when Lucy lost her first teeth, and the Innocent Child, who endures ever more horrible tortures and goes about moaning "Agony! Ebony! Mahogany!" in her pain. The funerals of little animals take up one chapter, a birthday, a partridge shoot, harvest festival, occupy others; and the only period put to the idyll is the final going away to school. All this, however, is innocence from an adult's remembering point of view. It is impossible to believe that children are other than ourselves, and that any childhood can be lived out without some uncertainties and without the cruelty known of it. H. H.

Salzburg Tales, by Christina Stead. New York: D. Appleton-Century Company. $2.50.

To say that these "Salzburg Tales" are a compensation for those who lacked the advantage of a nice credulous Middle-European grandmother in their youth is the truth but not the whole truth. They are both better and worse than that. For framework we have a group of pilgrims, come to Salzburg instead of to Canterbury, to worship at the shrine of art instead of religion. Like Chaucer's pilgrims, they tell stories between performances to while away the time. Miss Stead recreates as well as such a grandmother the rich craggy background that figured in the old legends, and the stories are full of the wonders and shivers that haunted us in our dark nights, but there is a difference. Grandmother's own voice was awe-stricken as she told her tales; it carried spine-pricking conviction; the Salzburg pilgrims are products of a wider horizon. A number of the stories are colorful and pointed, with a glow of imagination rare in our factual time. But too many of the phrases and characterizations are stylized; they lack the homeliness of speech which is the essence of weird tales. The vote must still go to grandmother. B. E. B.

Prayer for the Living, by Bruce Marshall. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $2.50.

Again Bruce Marshall is concerned with poking gentle fun at organized religion, and although "Prayer for the Living" is by nature of its background not the medium for such delightful tomfoolery as crept into "Father Malachy's Miracle," the author's lance is just as ready, if antiseptic. His story records the life of masters and pupils in the summer term of Scottish prep school—the summer term of 1915, when old boys of the school are already returning from the trenches, their period of youth as brief as their furloughs. The well meaning headmaster (Tired Tim) is assisted by the vague Reverend Charles (Wearie Willie) Murray, whose strong leanings toward Catholicism, and debates with his superior on the subject, are gems of malicious nonsense. Middleton, a young teacher about to leave for the Front, is drawn in the best schoolboy tradition. His love for the headmaster's daughter, Una, is told simply and without false sentiment, but always just below the lighter movements of the story is the beat of drums, and the horror of bodies mangled and young dreams dead. P. S.

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Prisoner's Song

Black Monastery, by Aladar Kuncz. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 409 pages. $2.75.

IT IS difficult to read this book without comparing it to "The Enormous Room," that brilliantly human masterpiece on prison life by E. E. Cummings. Both authors went through somewhat similar experiences in France. Both were arrested by the French authorities during the World War, both had a sentimental if not deep love of France, both were locked up in those huge and dank seminaries which the French government considered particularly adapted for the punishment of aliens. Both suffered the same privations, the same indignities, and both were treated with the same contempt for human suffering which has made the penal system in France the most brutal and heartless of western Europe.

However, it is the difference in their experiences even more, perhaps, than the difference of their personalities that makes these two books so distinct from each other. Cummings was interned in France for a little more than four months, Kuncz was interned for the full duration of the War. Cummings was among criminal aliens who, having served their sentence, were held at La Ferté Macé until they could be deported. Kuncz, on the other hand, was among men of his own kindred races; he was among Hungarian waiters, musicians, teachers like himself who had committed no other crime than that of being born in a country France was seeking to destroy. They had been, like Kuncz, interned to prevent them, putting it in its most charitable light, from returning home and being blown to pieces on the other side of the barbed wire by the French 75's.

In other words, Cummings was in a position to write from a detached point of view. He wrote not so much as a prisoner, but as someone looking at them from without. The corruption of prison life had not yet entered his blood. But with Kuncz it is a different story. Kuncz writes as a prisoner—he writes from within. He knows too well the long sleepless nights when a man looks forward to the hopelessness and desolation of another day. He knows the meanness of his fellow prisoners, the phobias, the insanities that sprout and flourish in the deep shadows of the prison walls. He knows the hunger after the most elementary needs, the preoccupation with sex, the constant obsession with escape. But above all he feels his instincts being twisted into queer, ugly shapes, slowly but irredeemably mutilated.

Few men have come out of prison unscathed and Kuncz was not one of them. The mark of the prisoner is branded deep in the book. You come across the sign throughout it, in the sickly romanticizing over the one or two women he chanced to come in contact with, in the sudden and inexplicable bursts of petulance and rage, in the hatred he bears certain fellow prisoners because they snuffle or chew noisily, in countless other details. It is all there.

The book, though it has not the detachment of "The Enormous Room," is a more valuable document in the great stories of captivity. It is also, perhaps, great literature, too, but the translation from the Hungarian makes it difficult to say. Sentences like, "It cost a great struggle to stop such of them as actually brought themselves to wash their clothes from using for that purpose the buckets from which the soup was dispensed," lead one to fear that if the original had any grace or facility of style it lies full fathom five under an inept translation.

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Man of the Revolution

The Burning of the Reichstag, by Douglas Reed. New York: Covici, Friede. 352 pages. $3.

Dimitrov, by Stella D. Blagoyeva. New York: International Publishers. 124 pages. $1.25.

WHEN THE Communists accused of setting fire to the Reichstag were being tried in Leipzig, everyone knew it was a frame-up and the trial would be a farce. The Nazis needed a goat, and these men were it. The foreign correspondents watched and wrote and cabled, and the world that wears a white collar drank the morning coffee and read a detective story that continued from day to day. The end had been decided; the question was: did the means make sense? The proceedings of the Reichstag trial were fascinating to read, especially since this world saw—whichever paper it was looking in, by whatever road it traveled, to whichever step, plane or convolution its mind was conditioned—only one possible and not altogether horrid result—this bunch of Reds would die. If the trial was a holiday in Rome for Nazi Germany, it was not quite a cruel class tragedy to the reporters, nor to the press they served, nor to the pleasant world that read their daily stories.

But when the trial continued toward its foredoomed end, and did turn into a farce, but of a different kind; when (I am quoting from Douglas Reed) "with five months of shackles behind and a dubious prospect in front, with policemen on either side, defending counsel forever plucking at their sleeves, the whole weight and authority of an alien justice to overcome, a hostile public and a hostile press, with the judge repeatedly threatening expulsion from the court, with the Premier of Prussia brandishing his fists and shouting about the gallows, with an alien tongue to master and the iron chains of judicial procedure to break"—when these men—all but one, and he a dull-wit, half-victim, half-tool, confessed and begging for death—forced their own acquittal, thus not only destroying the foredecided premise of the detective story but also foiling the dimly wished, hardly admitted lust to kill the enemy, an explanation was needed for this unaccountable conclusion, an alibi was sought. The alibi was found: Dimitroff.

Dimitroff was the man of destiny who upset the cart. "He did all the things that Mr. Kipling demands from a man in his poem 'If'—and that was more than anyone had ever expected from any man." If he had been born in any of a half-dozen great imperial countries he "could scarcely have failed to play an important part in contemporary events." He was exceptional; he was a genius, whom mere laws could not reach, though "he called himself a Communist and there is a great deal in a bad name." In all of Mr. Reed's book, and it is an expanded reprint of his dispatches to the most famous journal of the polite world, The London Times, there is not a word of what Dimitroff really was defending, not an inkling of the fact that in Leipzig there were on trial various ways of earning daily bread, not men.

The other book is a biography of Georgi Dimitroff, written for the workers, and it will not be read by the polite world. It is propaganda. In the history of the war between the classes, it places Dimitroff as a very conscious professional revolutionist, who found through events surely not of his making an opportunity to defend the practice of the theory known as Communism. If in the heat of the defense he saved his own life, that, he must have felt, was only another chance to continue agitating.

NATHAN ASCH.

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Not for the Drugstore Trade

Alblabooks: The First Five Titles in a New Series. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 250-400 pages. $2.50 each.

ALFRED A. KNOPF announces the Alblabooks as a series of "new and cheap editions of good books that have proved to be of permanent interest and value." In size, price and general appearance the books—except for a uniform and decorative binding designed by W. A. Dwiggins—resemble the average well made novel. Among the first five volumes of the series, the balance goes to biography, though there is André Gide's "Travels in the Congo," a book of travel interesting not only for what it records about life in French Africa, but also for the light it casts on Gide's character and development; and there is D. S. Mirsky's "History of Russian Literature," a general introduction to the field that has not been superseded in English (incidentally, the story ends with the year 1900, and it was written before Mirsky became a Marxist). As for the three biographies, Ambroise Vollard's "Renoir" is really a book of art gossip, with a fairly rounded picture of the subject rising out of its informal pages and general chat. It contains twenty-six illustrations and a list of Renoir's important works. Maurice Baring's "In My End Is My Beginning" is a novelized biography or a biographicized novel; you can take your choice. It tells the story of Mary Queen of Scots as she might have appeared to four of her ladies-in-waiting. Miss Taggard's "Emily Dickinson" is a sensitive and sane study, perhaps wrong in some of its conclusions, but nevertheless the best introduction to the poet's life.

One of the tragedies of American publishing is the speed with which even good books are forgotten, unless they happen to be of the popular type that is available for dollar reprints. These five books, selected from Mr. Knopf's own back list, are not for the drugstore trade. They will not appeal to a wide popular audience, and neither are they the best books that have been written in the last ten years, but each of them is honest, workmanlike and important in its own field, and it is good to hear that an effort is being made to keep them in print. Mr. Knopf might have carried the thing even farther (as W. W. Norton has done with his White Oak Library) by including books selected from the lists of other publishers; but the start already made is good enough, and heartening to see. PETER CUSP.

The Education of a Traitor

Twilight in the Forbidden City, by Sir Reginald Johnston. New York: D. Appleton-Century Company. 486 pages. $5.

NO MORE powerful literary *tour de force* in behalf of Japanese imperialism in Manchuria has appeared than this biography of Pu Yi, last of the Manchu emperors, by the man who tutored him in English (and much else besides) from 1919 to 1925. Not that Sir Reginald Johnston anywhere states this objective in forthright terms, though he approaches it in his reference to "the new dawn [*i. e.*, improvement in Pu Yi's fortunes] that in the opinion of many is now discernible elsewhere [*i. e.*, in Manchuria]."

The end is achieved by means that are at once more subtle and more compelling. In large part, the book consists of a thoughtful analysis of the declining fortunes of the Manchu ruling house after "the hundred days" of

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reform in 1898. Fortified by his personal contacts and experiences, Sir Reginald appraises with discriminating insight the character and activity of a generation of actors on China's historical stage. His discussions of political developments during the period of his tutorship, particularly as they affected the possibility of a Manchu restoration, throw new light on many hitherto obscure events. Pu Yi's efforts to overcome the corrupting influences of his artificial "court" in the Forbidden City, leading to a struggle in which Sir Reginald proved his chief mainstay, are fascinatingly described. In the end, the persuasiveness and charm of the author's style powerfully enlist the reader's sympathies in the Manchu cause.

A secondary *motif*, which becomes somewhat wearisome through continued repetition, is supplied by the contrast drawn between conditions under the republic and those under the monarchy. It does not occur to Sir Reginald that China's difficulties flow from causes deeper than the overthrow of the Manchus, and require more basic remedies than the reëstablishment of an enlightened constitutional monarchy, if that could be obtained. Social issues come within his purview in a curiously limited sense—that rulers are responsible for the welfare of their people. That the "people" might take the initiative in assuring their own welfare arouses in Sir Reginald a feeling akin to horror, judging from the approval with which he quotes Ku Hung-ming's diatribes against the present-day "worship of the mob." Yet he must be aware, though he gives no intimation of it, that the Chinese workers and peasants in the Soviet areas of the south-central provinces have already begun to take their fate into their own hands. When this "mob" has completed its task, there will no longer be any need of a Manchu emperor—propped up on his throne by Japanese bayonets—to set China straight.

T. A. Bisson.

The Fulness of Being

Earth Is Enough: An Essay in Religious Realism, by Baker Brownell. New York: Harper and Brothers. 347 pages. $3.50.

UNDER a somewhat fantastic title Mr. Brownell has undertaken to distinguish the esthetic values, those which arise immediately in the fulness of living itself, from the instrumental values of knowing and those of social action. Historically his starting point is the segregation by Christianity of eternity, with its system of postponed values, from time, a distinction which "helped to drain from man's life those finalities of each moment that can make life itself eternal." This dichotomy finds its counterpart in modern life, in industry in which "the profits of work are found at the end of labor rather than in it," and the earth of production is separated from the heaven of consumption. To this end and other maladjustments the sanction of religion has been invoked, but such a confusion of immediate values with the instrumental can work nothing but evil. Religion is not social. It may be ethical in the sense in which good health is ethical, but not as a system of morality. Social organization should be built to stand alone with values inherent in itself. Again, religion has been imported into the intellectual sphere as belief, which is properly a matter of science. Whereas "once theology rejected science with a good deal of arrogance now it is crashing the gates of science trying to get out." On the one hand, "God is an intimate doctrine of belief remote from the phenomena called religion," and destined, Mr. Brownell thinks, to dis-

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appear. On the other hand, "scientific belief is justified in structure and inner workings only by its own unique data and method." Religion is not moral and social, not intellectual and scientific. It is immediate living in moments which yield the sense of integration with reality, of "identity with the fulness of being." It is appreciation, not instrumental, in nature, sufficient to itself as science and social organization must be sufficient.

Mr. Brownell's critics will object to this restriction of religion by definition to the purely esthetic and appreciative. There is no doubt that the distinctions he draws under whatever name lead to clearness of thought, but it may be argued that the religious impulse enters into the realms of scientific investigation and social striving. Granted that science implies removal from the world for purposes of disinterested observation, does not the scientist become emotionally identified with the world in the moment of discovery and thus experience a moment of eternity? Granted that social organization is a matter of instrumental values, may not the revolutionist in contemplating or achieving a world of social justice experience a like sense of personal integration with it? Shelley made revolution a religion. Mr. Brownell would, of course, admit this as part of his theme that religion is a function of personality in which all men share. He does not, however, take account of such a transmutation of values, nor does he emphasize the part that coöperation plays in stimulating and nourishing the religious life. Worship or association in a formal ritual has historically been a large part of religious observance, now falling increasingly into discredit because of the dishonesty of the symbols about which such association gathers. Mr. Brownell refers to the arts as "the language of religion," but does he hold with Tolstoy that they are also instruments of worship, binding men together in common brotherhood?

Mr. Brownell is a poet as well as a philosopher. The sustained argument of his book is broken by interludes, descriptions of nature and life drawn from Guatemala and Chicago, character sketches, conversations, experiences which give an immediacy to his intellectual background, reveal the roots in life of his ideas, and relieve the impression, which otherwise the reader might carry away, of Mr. Brownell as cherishing in solitude his dream of a world which yields him its values so richly that he can exclaim with full heart, "Earth is enough!"

ROBERT MORSS LOVETT.

Suffering, by Alphonse Daudet. Translated from the French by Milton Garver. New Haven: Yale University Press. 89 pages. $2.

During the last thirteen years of his life, Alphonse Daudet was afflicted with an acute attack of locomotor ataxia. In this condition, he wrote the last two volumes of his humorous Tartarin trilogy, half a dozen plays, his literary memoirs, novels and stories. In 1930, thirty-three years after his death, Daudet's widow permitted the publication in France of the present collection of epigrams, aphorisms, notes and observations, under the title of "La Doulou." Here an entirely different Daudet gives a minute description of his physical and mental reactions, of his splendid, losing fight against his affliction. He tells us of the terror of crossing a street, of the different forms of pain, of his eternal fatigue, caused by insomnia. Chloral, of which he took large doses, morphine, different sorts of baths, suspensions, all failed to relieve him, though eventually helping to bring on an attack of dysentery. His fellow patients at the health resorts of Neris and Lamalou are wittily though charitably sketched; but mainly, the suffering that he tried stubbornly to hide from family and friends "reaches

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to the horizon and fills everything." The book is annotated by the master's secretary, M. André Ebner, is adequately translated and carries a superb, sensitive appreciation of Daudet by Marcel Proust, written in 1897.

BARTHOLD FLES.

Fables from the Critics

I

T. JEFFERSON QUINCH was sitting there in his watchtower at The Morning Chronicle waiting for a scoop about the cotton gin had been invented, be in any day now, and he, T. J., watching and thinking. Well there stepped up a chap, neat as a pin, and said, Please sir I am seeking fame can you throw anything my way?

What is on your mind small spud, said T. J., looking out over the confederate battle line and wearing a grim look.

Books to review, I'd like to review them, the youth said.

How old are you, said T. J. in a voice of rebuke. Twenty-nine, the youth said, and T. J. got exasperated at this, asking him where did he think he was, telling him come back when he was eighty-seven, maybe he'd get a shot at page 24 along with the other youngsters.

Oh sir, the chap said, taken aback. Sir he said, picking up courage and putting on a very American look—resolute, clean, sink or swim (respectful albeit)—Sir I might die waiting, couldn't I do something now I do not wish to die unknown.

Get along with you, everybody in his turn, what do you want me to do push out my first-line critics, get along with you, said T. J., picking up his spy-glass. Hm, he said after a minute, looks like Burgoyne. Here the youth could contain himself no longer. I can write, he said, you ought to see me write, and I have also an idea. Now—

At this point T. J. arose and threw the youth out into the corridor, for he was wroth at the insult, and if the truth were told he beat him a little over the head with a certain nightstick that had put a full stop on many's the person with ideas, and would again, god willing, and T. J. wiped it and hung it up, and that was that.

But what was his extreme surprise two weeks later to get a letter from the youth, stating very civilly that he hoped no offense, but what he had come to say had not been said, and it was only this: that The Chronicle Book Review might be very happy to have a writer who could sound like a radical writer, and review radical books in a tolerant way, and at the same time take the pants clear off them, saying, No one is more sympathetic to the author's material than the Present Reviewer, but it is only too apparent (or, one cannot but perceive) that he can't think he can't write, too bad the book is so lousy.

Why didn't he say so then, said T. J., still rubbing his chin in doubt, however, for the name on the letter was not an old American one. My boy, he said, calling the youth to him a year or so later and clapping him on the shoulder to make up for everything, let us see what you can do; and he gave him a novel about a strike.

Well the youth was a perfect whizz, worked up from page 29 to page 7 in twelve novels, an Upton Sinclair and two travelandadventures. He got into his stride at two and a third columns a week, making the books sound just like two and a third columns and nothing else, and got paid by regular check. He even placed three blurbs on prominent jackets and picked up a neat controversy with an author in the correspondence box. But I owe it all to T. J. though,

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he is still always quick to say, usually in the outer office. Without T. J. I don't know what I'd do. Which is the literal truth. A grand old man, he will conclude, raising his voice.

T. J., sitting there on the other side of the partition, never lets on he hears this, not wishing to embarrass the boy, but it makes him reflect. And they say, he says, shaking his head sadly though with a twinkle in his eye. And they say I am not hospitable to new ideas, ah well.

Invariably the twinkle dies then. But never let it be said, says T. J., giving a thrust up with his chin, that for falling of the arches or for any other cause I shall ever be less ready for the Industrial Revolution when it arrives than the next man. And maybe more so, indeed sir. It may well be more so. Ah well, what is it this week Hal, he says then, not unkindly, for he has grown very fond of the youth.

II

Then there is the fable about a resolution that was resolved and sent to a magazine that reviewed books, giving titles, authors' names, the price, and also a great deal of valuable comment. The document itself was no fable but a sad fact and read along like this, except for certain details that we may call the product of the imagination:

To the Editor of All the Book Reviews:

Whereas, sir, it is the knowledge of the undersigned that all volumes of poetry are automatically turned over by you to Mr. Harlow Lackaday because (a) his eyesight it isn't getting so good now, (b) volumes of poetry are always short and sometimes padded, (c) they have wide margins, (d) and nice big type;

And whereas we feel that, all things being taken into consideration, including the nature of poetry, this is more to the best interests of the hereinbefore mentioned Lackaday than to those of all the various muses, not to forget the Scandinavian;

And whereas however we the undersigned are in accord with you that Mr. Lackaday should not be turned loose to starve or otherwise go off his feed;

Now, therefore, be it resolved that poetry in general and the output of the undersigned authors in particular be taken out of the hands of the hereinbefore mentioned reviewer and stuck up out of reach where he won't be able to play with it at all; he and his rightful heirs to be given full and complete liberty in the matter of quoting the more unfortunate passages from the field of children's literature only, the separate volumes of which will be found to have (a) uniformly larger type, (b) margins you could drive a cart through, (c) even fewer pages, and (d) pictures in various tasty groupings of colors.

Signed and sealed before me this etc.

The resolution was sealed and signed by some 47 poets (21 art-for-arters, 7 straight ivory towers, 1 contributor to Poetry, 6 hole-in-the-wallers, 8 prolies, 1 Trotskyite, 2 Objectivists, 1 best seller) and sent by registered mail, return receipt requested, to the editor of the book reviews, who read it through four times, gave a loud blast of laughter, and turned the whole matter over to his kiddies editor. Later it was allowed to get out of print and rapidly forgotten, of course, because as the kiddies editor said, It might be all right theoretically, but what were you going to do with all the piecework grannies now doing books for the children's department—teach them to read and put them on Recent Fiction, for pity sakes?

OTIS FERGUSON.

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ERRATUM

The first name of Alan Porter incorrectly appears as Allen on page 278 of the current issue.

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